

TROUBLED CRAFT AND NOVICE TEACHERS:

**AN ETHNOGRAPHIC ACCOUNT OF EMERGING
PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES OF NOVICE TEACHERS IN
THE ENGLISH LIFELONG LEARNING SECTOR.**

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Abstract

In adopting a qualitative, ethnographically informed approach this thesis explores the identity formation of novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England. The research is concerned with four areas for inquiry: how novice teachers perceive the relationship between their professional practices, experiences and emerging teacher identities; the usefulness of the concept of 'craft' in sociological writings to theorise the identities of novice teachers; the appropriateness of a digital ethnographic methodological approach enabling effective research into teachers lives in this sector; and, the applicability of online asynchronous blogging practices to support the development of the professional practices by novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England. The identity and pedagogic practices of these novice teachers are contextualised by the 'turbulent times' for both the workplace of this sector and the teacher education that supports entrants into this sector. The fieldwork for the research follows two cohorts of new entrants into first-time employment across an 18-month period. In developing an understanding of craft identities, blogging practices are developed as a methodological tool within a digital ethnographic approach, exploring the potential for this revised ethnography. The use of reflective practices through online tools to generate data is conceived herein as an 'epistemology of doing': a research practice that in turn supports in an ethical way the lives and social practices of those who participate. The findings of the thesis suggest (contrary to use of the term craft by neo-liberalism) that novice teachers' craft practice and craft identity are a potentially stable basis for sustained practice in the otherwise turbulent lifelong learning sector. However, this 'stable basis' also provides contradictions, uneasy relations, compromises and insurmountable challenges when buttressed against the performativity cultures of the sector.

Key words:

Teacher identity, teacher education, digital ethnography, vocational education, further education

Declaration

Through the duration of writing this thesis I have had the opportunity to publish some parts of the methodology of the work and the context, prior to thesis submission. Elements and ideas within the thesis appear as:

Kidd, W. (2013) Investigating the lives of new teachers through ethnographic blogs, *Ethnography and Education* 8 (2), 210-223.

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Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|---|
| FE | Further Education |
| ITE | Initial Teacher Education |
| NQT | Newly Qualified Teacher |
| Ofsted | Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills |
| PCET | Post-Compulsory Education and Training |
| PGCE | Professional/Post Graduate Certificate in Education |
| VET | Vocational Education and Training |
| CMC | Computer Mediated Communication |

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Aims of the thesis

This thesis provides an account of novice teachers' experiences of entering first-time employment in the lifelong learning sector in England, exploring transitional social practices (Bourdieu, 1990) and 'boundary crossing' (Heggen, 2008) within an ethnographic framework. I focus on the lifelong learning sector in England, recognising that educational sectors are different and that the lifelong learning sector itself is different between the countries of the United Kingdom (Avis *et al*, 2012). This research extends knowledge of how novice teachers frame their identity constructions. It creates ethnographic opportunities for novice teachers to reflect upon their own identity formation practices. In doing so, this research provides a framework for the exploration of both a 'digital ethnographic' methodology and a theorising of identity and practice as 'craft'. The findings of this research add to the debates around the construction of teacher identity and complement previous work by a range of previous writers (Colley, *et al*, 2007; Orr, 2009; Orr and Simmons, 2010; 2011; Dixon *et al*, 2010).

1.1.1 *Troubling craft and doing ethnography*

In providing an ethnographic account of the experiences of novice teachers this thesis is entitled '*Troubled Craft and Novice Teachers*'. This 'troubled' craft refers to both the ways in which the novice teachers who participate are *troubled* by the act of boundary crossing and *troubled* by the workplace settings they find themselves in. For these novices 'craft', as an ethical orientation to skilful practice, is difficult to locate and hard-won. Yet, in writing this thesis I seek to also 'trouble craft' in a different sense – to demonstrate that (mis)understandings of this term can be *troubled* by reference to the work of Richard Sennett (2008). While there has been previously a great deal of now older literature on craft knowledge (see Leinhardt, 1990; Grimmett and

MacKinnon, 1992; Hagger and McIntyre, 2006) little is applicable to today's context of the lifelong learning sector in England. The neo-liberal use of the term (Gove, 2010a; 2010b; Hayes, 2010) in turn, has resulted in a widespread demonization of 'craft' as a signpost for current reactionary policies in England seeking to decouple teacher education from the work of universities. However, notions of craft and its implications for knowledge and practice have a rich theoretical and philosophical history and date back to differences between Plato and Aristotle's uses of the term '*techne*' in distinction to '*episteme*' (Ryle, 1946). More recently, and of direct significance for teacher education, Schön's attempt to theorise the 'reflective practitioner', now largely canonical for teacher education, also pursues an attempt to engage with craft (Argyris and Schön, 1974; 1978; Schön, 1983; 1987). That there might be alternative conceptualisations of this term then, have been ignored. Building upon existing accounts of teacher identity in the lifelong learning sector in England, the distinct contribution this thesis makes is to demonstrate the implications of the craft lens for theorising novice teacher identity in the current landscape. In doing so, the findings of this investigation stand as a counterpoint to neo-liberal notions of teaching as craft. In applying this re-framed craft perspective I also *trouble* the teacher education literature's response to 'craft' as well (Jarvis, 2005; SCETT, 2011; Orchard and Winch, 2015; Philpott, 2015). This is explored further in *Chapter 3, Theorizing 'Craft'*.

In its subtitle, I present the thesis as '*An Ethnographic Account of Emerging Professional Identities of Novice Teachers in the English Lifelong Learning Sector*'. The account is ethnographic, as argued in *Chapter 4, Methodology and Method*, since it provides stories in the words of the participants, rooted in their understandings of their own lived experience (Atkinson, 1998). While recognising the co-constructed nature of the data, the account provides 'constructions of constructions'. Following the claims made by Geertz (1973) (while being aware of the pitfalls of reducing a body of work down to individual quotation) I agree that while a highly contested research terrain, ethnography is 'the kind of intellectual effort that it is'. In other words, even in the creation of an online space (that is not a 'place' yet refers to another place in the offline world),

it is possible to construct an ethnographic intellectual endeavour while recognising that this is a community created for the purposes of the research (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). This ethnography, however, is akin to the digital ethnography found in the writings of Hine (2000) and Murthy (2008), and adopts the use of collaborative blogging as a means to build community and share stories and understandings of the world rooted in participant's accounts.

1.2 The research problem

Previous research has documented the 'changing times' of lifelong learning workplace reform in England and the challenges the teacher workforce face within such landscapes (Avis, 1999; 2009; 2016; Yandell and Turvey, 2007, Orr, 2009). As Bourdieu refers to it, the educational practices within the context of the sector are becoming based upon the 'tyranny of the market' (2003). In exploring this context, the thesis provides a new understanding of the boundary crossing of these lifelong learning teachers, as called for by previous writers in the field (Colley, James and Diment, 2007). However, through my ethnographic research I offer an interpretation developed through the theoretical lens of craft and influenced by the sociological writings of Sennett (2008). The point made by Colley and colleagues is that the isolated and radicalised practice of teachers in the lifelong learning sector does not fit easily within the original conception of community of practice in Wengerian terms (Colley, James and Diment, 2007; Colley, 2010). Building on the insights of previous literature (Dixon *et al*, 2010; Orr and Simmons, 2010; O'Leary, 2013; 2015) when discussing teacher identity, in this thesis I offer an interpretation of distance and radicalisation which is as problematic for some as it is a salvation for others: namely, that a craft identity as a source for professional practice is a mitigating factor in who novice teachers become and in how they enact these identities.

In providing a digital ethnography centred upon the social (and research) practice of 'blogging', this research also demonstrates the appropriateness of

the use of blogs as a data generation tool and as an ethnographic site of (second-order) interactional encounters and reflective practices. In doing so the research makes a distinctive contribution to the exploration of new teacher identity, positioning online spaces as a highly profitable and meaningful source for research activity and data generation.

Previously, Evans (2010) asked: how do new entrants into a profession think and feel their way through the profession? In addressing this question this thesis conducts an inquiry into the identity practices of novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England that has three key elements:

1. To make more intelligible the early experiences of novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector, making complex previous understandings of the experiences of those entering employment practices for the first-time;
2. Capturing data on changing and developing novice teacher identities and practices in the lifelong learning sector and rendering these visible, understandable and explainable through the adoption of a theoretical lens rooted in notions of craft drawn from the writings of Richard Sennett (2008);
3. Through adopting a digital ethnography, to explore the use of online blogging as a means to capture data as a new research tool conceived within this emerging 'digital ethnographic' approach.

1.2.1 Research questions

Drawing upon the above context, the research questions are formulated as follows:

RQ1: How do novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England perceive the relationship between their professional practices, experiences and emerging teacher identities?

RQ2: To what extent is the concept of 'craft' useful to theorise the professional practices, experiences and identities of novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England?

RQ3: How can a digital ethnographic methodological approach enable effective ethnographic research into novice teachers' early professional practice and identity formation in the lifelong learning sector in England?

RQ4: To what extent can online asynchronous blogging practices support the development of professional practices by novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England?

1.3 The study

The study adopts a 'digital' or 'virtual ethnography'. This research locates the period of 18 months on-line 'fieldwork' via communal blogging as having significance for notions of place, space and self in ethnographic inquiry. Over the duration of the 18 months, two samples are drawn – both from consecutive pre-service training moving into first employment from their Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in Post-Compulsory Education and Training (PCET). This inquiry positions both the researcher and participants as co-constructors of both the site of virtual interaction, and to a certain extent, as collective decision-makers as to what contributes as field and field notes within an 'epistemology of doing' (Rybas and Gajjala, 2007). In this research, drawing upon discussions of the post-Fordist nature of teaching and teacher identities in the lifelong learning sector, novice teacher identity practices are rendered as problematic, tentative and uneasy. Within this, I am interested in the relationships between practice and identity – how novice teachers conceive of and frame 'who we are and who we think other people are' (Danielewicz, 2001: 10).

To explore these issues the research adopts a methodology of digital ethnography – an orientation to ethnography that takes the tenants of ethnography and applies them to online spaces (Hine, 2000; 2005; Beaulieu, 2007; Murthy, 2008; Kozinets, 2010). In exploring the potential for a digital ethnography of novice teachers' identity and pedagogic practices, I make the argument that this methodology provides unique opportunities to explore teacher identity and in doing so to produce data that is ethnographically 'thick' (Geertz, 1973). These qualitative research practices develop the use of online blogging as a means to create group reflection. They enable novice teachers to tell stories of encounters and experiences and how these are seen to inform identity practices. These methodological practices and the data generated create a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) which points in the direction of the (renewed) usefulness of notions of craft to help theorize teacher identity.

In exploring issues of (new) teacher (new) identity through online blogging practices, I am reminded of my role as a teacher educator and the centrality of identity to practice and to making-sense of practice. I have found the teacher education literature useful here. For example,

‘...in trying to become teachers, students must develop an internal, personal sense of themselves as teachers. But in order to thrive as teachers once they leave our classrooms, they must develop an external, public, collective identity as a teacher’ (Danielewicz, 2001: 151).

There is an ethical and professional obligation here that I feel deeply as a teacher educator (and as one whose own identity and practices are being (re)formed in alignment with the development of the thesis and research): one role of teacher education is ‘...to foster their sense of belonging to a teaching community before they are actually teaching’ (Danielewicz, 2001: 151). I demonstrate in this research that this obligation can develop beyond pre-service teacher education into first employment settings. I do this by co-creating

an ethnographic online space (through blogging) that provides support, opportunities for reflection and group dialogue.

1.4 Research design

This research adopts an epistemological practice that some commentators describe as a 'virtual' or 'digital' ethnography (Hine, 2000; Murthy, 2008). Namely, that through the adoption of new (virtual) spaces for ethnographic inquiry it is possible to trouble previous notions of site, place, space and meaning when collaborating in online fields: that it is possible to undertake a digital ethnography in 'nebulous settings' (Rutter and Smith, 2005). These are 'nebulous' given that online and digital places/spaces previously would have been absent from the insights of ethnography. While these spaces are potentially less well defined than the traditional notion of field, nonetheless it is possible, as this thesis demonstrates, to get close to participants and to generate a 'thick description'. The significance of this is located within a growing international debate in the field of education concerning digital ethnographic methods (Hine, 2000; 2005; Beaulieu, 2007; Murthy, 2008) or 'netnography' (Kozinets, 2010). These are still a 'contested terrain for ethnography' (Beaulieu, 2007: 141). As Kozinets puts it, the promise of digital ethnography is that it claims to offer '...a specialised form of ethnography adapted to the unique computer-mediated contingencies of today's social worlds' (2010: 1). The increased presence of networked and hypermediated technologies leads to the possibility for an 'ethnography mediated' (Beaulieu, 2007). Much of this literature seeks to demonstrate both the '...epistemological boon and bane in methodological discourse around virtual or online ethnography, and cyberanthropology' (Beaulieu, 2007), often drawing upon ambiguities regarding the nature of (re)conceptualising the notion of field and fieldwork in the light of newly drawn (cyber) spaces (Goodall, 1991).

Previous educational digital ethnography has engaged with a range of social media and online spaces including Facebook (Baker, 2013), Second Life

(Fitzsimons, 2013) and Blackboard Collaborate (Kulavuz-Onal and Vasquez, 2013). As Hookway notes,

‘...while social scientists have been occupied with the question of how and to what extent cyberspace shapes social life, they have also become interested in the question of how cyberspace can expand the social researcher’s toolkit’ (2008: 91-92).

This research contributes to these debates by positioning the use of blogs as a useful and ethnographically significant research enterprise. To do this, participants were asked to engage with and interact through a blog, generating asynchronous discussion and reflective entries similar to a diary, but online and open to others’ scrutiny. In terms of the location of this research within qualitative practices, I and the participants collectively inhabited a shared (online) space – one which only exists due to the research practice – but in this space we [myself as researcher/ethnographer and the participants] create an online community which enables us to make-meanings about and make-sense-of social practices in other off-line interactions – teaching and relationships in first-time employment settings. This sense-making can only be achieved through the establishment of research practices within an interpretative paradigm and the creation of a qualitative experience based upon the interplay between self, presence, reflection, interaction and meaning-making. This allows the research to explore the nature of ‘being’ and lived experiences (Illingworth, 2006): using the online to explore the off-line *Lebenswelt* [the lived world of socially-constructed meaning] (Husserl, 1970). The cyberculture constructed through the ‘fieldwork’ of this research was adapted and changed by the participants themselves in a variety of ways and being drawn by individuals for whom their cultural significance was not fully realised at the start of the inquiry. The participants came to rely on each other and the ‘space’ constructed by the (virtual) field as a means to offer profound professional dialogue and support during the often difficult period of boundary-crossing and the associated ‘transition shock’ (Veenman, 1984). In this way, ‘...subjects/objects produce selves - through typing, writing, image manipulation, creation of avatars, digital video and audio - and engage in practices of everyday life at these interfaces’ (Rybas and Gajjala, 2007).

1.5 Definition of terms

Lifelong learning: To discuss the lifelong learning sector in England, a variety of commentators use different terms and phrases whereby often the same terms are used to mean different aspects of the sector, or different terms used to mean the same (Lucas and Nasta, 2009; 2010; Avis, 2009; 2016). It is possible to speak about: lifelong learning, learning and skills, adult education, adult and community education, Further Education (FE), and Post-Compulsory Education and Training (PCET). The multiple terms on offer reflect the confused nature and status of the sector and illustrate that its reach is wide and varied. What the literature agrees upon though, is the highly diverse nature of the sector (Avis, 2016; Busher, James and Piela, 2015). Various, practitioners in this sector might refer to themselves as: teachers, lecturers, tutors, trainers or facilitators. Whereas 'learners' might be positioned as: pupils, students, trainees, adults, employees or clients. For the purposes of this research, the term 'lifelong learning' will be adopted since this reflects the diverse nature of the settings into which the novice teachers in the sample find themselves. They work across the sector as a whole, in community education, adult education classes, large FE colleges as well as 'Sixth Form Colleges'.

Novice teachers: For the purposes of this research, 'novice' teachers are not 'student teachers' or 'trainees'. While both groups might be seen as 'beginning teachers', or at least, teachers at the beginning of a professional career, novice teachers herein are those who are recently qualified (in this case after a period of full-time, one year, pre-service Initial Teacher Education (ITE) following a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) qualification in Post-Compulsory Education and Training (PCET)). They are entering paid employment for the first-time, across a variety of settings. In the UK schools sector, such groups would be referred to as Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) and would be entering the 'induction' transition (referred to as 'transition point one') from 'training' to 'trained'. While this terminology might be correct in essence, it does

not easily and directly translate into the lifelong learning sector in England given both old and new regulations (post-September 2007 and again post-September 2013) regarding the nature of the need for ‘qualification’ and the professional status of teachers (Lingfield, 2012; LSIS, 2013).

Blogs: The site of digital/virtual ethnographic interaction in this research are (we)blogs [*Web + Log = weblog*] – seen as both the medium of data collection and as the (revised) ethnographic field. Following Hookway, blogs are:

‘...a weblog, or ‘blog’ as they are more commonly known, refers to a website which contains a series of frequently updated, reverse chronologically ordered posts on a common web page, usually written by a single author’ (2008: 92).

Epistemology of doing: Due to the emphasis upon reflection, joint practice, co-meaning making and the value this has to support professional learning, I argue that the use of blogs in this fashion is an ‘*epistemology of doing*’ (Rybas and Gajjala, 2007). I adopt this term to refer to the ways in which participation in this ethnographic research offers something of value to those whose stories and reflections form the data. This is similar in some regards to the notion of a ‘relational intimacy’ or a ‘relational agency’ (Edwards, 2005; Edwards and Mackenzie, 2005; Edwards and Fowler, 2007). In other words, the adoption of communication and ‘talk’ supports the critical development of participants and practitioners, to help participants in ‘conversation’ to explore future directions for action. In this way, ethically, research participation provides a space and opportunity for novice teachers to communicate, collaborate and to deepen their understanding of their experiences.

Neo-Liberalism: While noting the highly contested nature of the term ‘neo-liberalism’ I refer, following Lauder *et al*, (2006), to the rise of: marketization, globalisation and individualism in late-capitalism. Neo-liberalism in terms of public policy in general, and educational policy in particular, is seen to introduce post-Fordist workplaces with managerial and performativity cultures (O’Leary,

2015). Coming from Lyotard (1979), performativity refers to increased audit and surveillance cultures seeking power through codification of outputs. For Brown and Lauder (1992), post-Fordism can be conceived as economic focus upon: flexibility; globalized competition; market forces; individualisation; and, consumption.

Craft: Unlike the neo-liberal approach to craft which sees teaching-as-craft as an atheoretical act of apprentice-style learning, this thesis adopts the sociological writings of Sennett (2008) who notes,

‘...craftsmanship [sic] names an enduring, basic human impulse, the desire to do a job well for its own sake...craftsmanship cuts a far wider swath than the skilled manual labour; it serves the computer programmer, the doctor, and the artist; parenting improves when it is practiced as a skilled craft, as does citizenship’ (9).

Developing a Sennettian approach, this thesis will define craft as: *An ethical orientation to practice and identity wherein teachers as reflective agents use theory, tacit understanding and espoused theory to develop successful practice, the qualities of which have value for the practitioner and are a source of sustainable personal and professional pleasure.*

Hagger and McIntyre suggest that for the researcher, craft knowledge ‘...must be understood as it is found, embedded in the practice of individual teachers’ (2006: 33). It occurs within everyday practice and is therefore complex and its orchestration is sophisticated. To ‘embed craft in teacher practice’ the thesis explores the extent ‘craft’ can provide a useful model for understanding the experiences of the novice teachers in the sample of this ethnographic research.

1.6 Framing the thesis

Over the past twenty years the lifelong learning sector in England has undergone significant (and at times rapid) change (Avis, 2009; 2016). Alongside this context there has developed in parallel a body of literature concerned with

the identity constructions and workplace conditions of teachers in this educational sector. While replicating some aspects of this literature as applied to debates in a schools context (primary and secondary schools in the wider United Kingdom), the lifelong learning sector literature constructs a narrative on teacher identity alongside a second narrative of post-Fordist reform and the turbulent conditions that this is framed by (Coffield *et al*, 2008; Coffield, 2015). This turbulence is a story of both rapid changing organisational and institutional settings on the one hand, and of policy change on the other. These changes in policy concern funding, workplace and workforce conditions and significant swings in the legal status of qualifications to teach. This policy change also includes periods of large-scale curriculum and qualification change (Hodgson and Spours, 2003; Avis *et al*, 2010; Avis 2016). This has resulted in a literature concerned with professionalism, professional reform and deskilling (Lucas, 2013; Tummons, 2014; Feather, 2014; Crawley, 2015) as well as the 'rehabilitation' of the (postmodern) apprenticeship within the Vocational Education and Training (VET) workforce (Nielsen and Pedersen, 2011) and the implications of 'qualification' for FE teachers on professional status (Lucas and Nasta, 2009; 2010; Lucas, 2013). It is within this context that both my work as a teacher educator and the research for this thesis sits. This is a time when English neo-liberal governments and (schools) Education Ministers proclaimed on the one hand the 'craft' based (practical and atheoretical) nature of teaching, and on the other hand, the need for increased rigour and security around teachers' professional qualifications and school-based training. Yet in the lifelong learning sector there has been the complete transformation and then policy reversal in the mechanisms for, standards over, and professional qualifications for those who teach (Avis, 2009; 2016; Avis *et al*, 2012; Taubman, 2015). It is into this sector the novice teachers in this ethnography begin to work and through the group reflective practices constructed through the blogging, explore their encounters and experiences to better know themselves.

Recently, and with regards to the lifelong learning sector in England, Daley (2015) asserts the continued relevance of and need for 'FE teachers' to take an active control of their practices in the light of change in workplace settings. Despite the 'toxicity' of structural and policy forces in the sector (Coffield, 2015),

new teachers are seen to have an awareness of the changing times for FE and their response to this must be to take control of how they practice, how they work with others and how they see themselves (Coffield, 2015; Petrie, 2015). For example, in this initial ‘... growing literature on further education (FE) about ‘professionalism’, but much less about the working lives of experienced teachers’ (Jephcote, Salisbury and Rees, 2008: 163), there has developed a concern with identity alongside, and framed by, the awareness of managerialism and neo/post-Fordist discourses (Robson, 1998; Duckworth and Brzeski, 2010; O’Leary, 2015). Alongside this there is now the growth of interest in this educational sector amongst academic research and literature from a once notable absence of research in the field and a limited public awareness, to now a range of work concerned with teacher’s work and lives (Randle and Brady, 1997; Petrie, 2015). Given the importance of this sector in English neo-liberal policies (variously from New Right Conservative, New Labour, Coalition and Conservative governments) and policy rhetoric (Avis, 2009) I believe there is an obligation on practitioners in the field of teacher education to understand the realities of the professional lives and practice spaces into which new teachers in this sector work. However, in exploring these issues, the thesis will apply a ‘craft perspective’ as the lens for this research (Sennett, 2008). To borrow a phrase I have found useful from earlier schools-based literature, the thesis will uncover and make complex both the ‘easy beginnings’ and ‘painful beginnings’ (Huberman, 1989) of ‘novice teachers’ regarding their relationships with others, their own developing pedagogic practices and their sense of their own changing identity constructions.

1.7 Theoretical framework

In exploring the reflections and perceptions of novice teachers via the online blogging space it is possible to get close to their reflections on their craft practices and within this, their formation of ‘craft identities’. This usage of the term ‘craft’ is informed by the writings of Richard Sennett (2008) and very different from the limited atheoretical conceptualization currently in use within neo-liberal rhetoric (Gove 2010a; 2010b; Hayes 2010; Derrick 2011). For example, in 2010 the then English Coalition Government’s Minister for

Education (Michael Gove) and the Minister for Business and Skills (John Hayes) in a series of speeches, addresses and policy documents (Hayes 2010; Gove 2010, cited in Derrick 2011) positioned teaching and teacher learning as a matter of 'craft'. The key problem with this explanation is it conceived teachers' learning as an apprenticeship of 'copying': novice teachers would 'learn' by replicating the practices of established teachers in a largely uncritical fashion. Many writers, usually from a teacher education background, have challenged this on the grounds that conceptualisations of 'craft' removes the role of theory, research-informed-practice and the role of the university from the training and education of teachers (SCETT, 2011; Surman, 2011). In this view craft is associated with an apprenticeship-learning model (Philpott, 2015) and as such is interpreted as an erosion of professionalism (Jarvis, 2005). This interpretation, though, overlooks much previous work using alternative 'craft' definitions (Mills, 1959; Sennett, 2008) and long-standing discussions over the role of situated and tacit knowledge in informing practice (Polanyi, 1958). More recently it fails to reconcile the view that craft practice might help strengthen claims of professionalism by positioning teachers as occupying a specialist status (Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2012).

Sennett describes the sense of 'craft' as a '...skill of making things well' (2008: 8). In offering this definition he in turn explores the links between bodily practices and abstract thinking and presents the doctor, the scientist, the musician, the plumber and builder all as 'craft' practitioners. In this thesis, I ask, how does this framework apply to teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England? Sennett explores the sense of reward, ownership and self within craft practice and how it is frequently at odds with post-capitalist workplace practices. I will adopt this lens when exploring the work of novice teachers. I argue that it is through this reworking of 'craft' that it is possible to unpick the connections between relationships, classroom practice and identity formation – aspects of on-going and newly (re)formed situated learning and boundary crossing. In this research I explore the relational encounters of new teachers with more experienced others, and how they report and reflect on these. To do so, this thesis borrows some of the language of boundary crossing (Heggen, 2008; Trent, 2013) as a basis to conceive entry into first-employment.

1.8 Authorship, autobiography and positionality

In charting and documenting ethnographic stories, my role within this research is complex and multi-faceted. I occupy positions of otherness to those who talk about their practice on the blog and yet I am also a blogging participant. I am an e-moderator as I have responsibility for initially 'owning' the space and need to ensure ethical engagement, yet the same full permissions are available to everyone to edit as they see fit. I am a critical friend, an outsider to the group, and yet I was also their tutor and, in some cases, assessor when they were undertaking their pre-service training: my ethnographic researcher-identity is complex.

I recognize that all interpretative practice locates the position of the author within the research's own lines of subjective inquiry. After a 14 year career as a teacher across a variety of contexts and educational sectors in the UK I 'found myself' entering employment in higher education for the first-time as a teacher educator, initially adopting an assumption that pedagogically and professionally this work as a second-order professional would be 'still the same yet different' (Kosnik, 2007: 18) from being a 'teacher' in the 'first-order' (Murray, 2002). I was conscious that of value and significance within my emerging new pedagogies was the need to have '...intentionality about making the thinking behind my teaching visible.' (Kosnik, 2007: 18). What increasingly struck me, however, as I entered this new role, was the intertextuality of the boundary crossing I was experiencing inline with the same processes in the pre-service trainees I taught: I was moving from one career phase to another, re-establishing my (new) professional identity and role. I was accommodating change (and in places resisting cultural norms of the new institution I joined) and yet trying to fit in with new groups. I was an outsider resisting, rejecting and accommodating new social practices all at the same time. The same was true for the student teachers I worked with. This realisation is at the heart of the genesis of this research and the decision to undertake a Professional Doctorate – to establish a body of work to better inform my teacher education pedagogy

by investigating how the identities of new teachers are constructed. In this way I 'insist upon identity' as being at the heart of my practice – both my own identity and to support the identity formation of those I educate and train. This issue is one of prime significance for my own research-informed practice: how do novice teachers construct new identities as they enter first-time employment, and what does this mean for the support teacher educators provide student teachers leading up to their transition from the academy into employment?

This double hermeneutic – I am boundary-crossing (Heggen, 2008) supporting the boundary-crossing practices of others – led to some other stark realisations: the satisfaction and 'easy beginnings' (Huberman, 1989) of my own entry into the teaching profession did not seem to match that described by newer teachers I knew – as colleagues and friends. Those entering the profession over the past 10 years, seemed to be describing a level of accountability, surveillance and control that I never really felt in my own day-to-day practice. In fact, quite the opposite: as a classroom teacher, a senior leader and as an 'advanced skills teacher' I felt increasing levels of freedom, autonomy and creativity the longer I worked in the profession. I enjoyed and received huge personal and professional satisfaction from 'knowing' that I worked in a profession which allowed me to act with autonomy and through which I received the high professional regard of others. Yet other staff around me seemed to perceive their own location within the same frameworks, structures and cultural norms as almost the complete opposite: limiting, constraining, controlling and ultimately dissatisfying. Many of these colleagues and friends left the profession, despite being what I would have described at the time as having good levels of practice.

Looking back on these experiences now, I see within them notions of 'craft practice' as framed by Sennett (2008). I would not have espoused these as such at the time, but recognise now the 'pleasure' and 'rewards' of the job 'done well' as a hallmark of the craft-practice identified by Sennett – seen in decline in the light of modern-day post-industrial/late-capitalist work cultures (Sennett,

2008; Frayling, 2011). I recognise that I have always enjoyed 'craft practice' (framed in this way) and felt a tremendous amount of autonomy and professional pleasure as a result. But seemingly this was not the experience of new entrants in the profession. Becoming a teacher educator, informed by these contradictory perceptions of the same changing educational landscape raises questions for the basis of my new professional identity and practice: How do new teachers accommodate and navigate a course through the experiences they have in first-time employment? What does the changing context and landscape of lifelong learning in England offer the lives of new teachers? It is into this context that my research is formed: interested in exploring the nature of identity and practice in the lifelong learning sector in England while using craft as a theoretical lens through which to explore the challenges the shifting terrain of the sector has for novice entrants.

1.9 The structure of the thesis

Following this introduction, *Chapter 2, Literature Review*, will locate the context for this research within research literature exploring the context and rapid workplace 'reforms' and change of the lifelong learning sector in England (Dixon *et al*, 2010; Orr and Simmons, 2010; O'Leary, 2013; 2015). Indebted to this literature as I am, it nonetheless underplays the connections found within the work of Sennett (2008) between what practitioners 'do' in their craft reconciled with how they present 'who they are' as craft practitioners. In this literature the connections between professionalism, deskilling and identity struggle in the sector is well discussed, despite the initial absence of research from the early 1990s. However, within the theoretical frameworks this existing literature creates, the possibilities for professional identity and teacher ethical practice and pedagogy drawn upon a 'craft' identity can be further explored. Conceptualisations of craft in neo-liberalism and in teacher education are continued in *Chapter 3, Theorizing 'Craft'*. I demonstrate in this chapter how existing dominant discussions of teacher identity and practice are enhanced through the adoption of the Sennettian view of craft. Using Sennett and exploring his intellectual debt to C Wright Mills (1959), Polanyi, (1958) and

Schön (1983; 1987) it is possible to identify an approach to craft which draws upon an ethical, tacit and espoused theorization by teachers of their practice and how these connect to early identity formation.

Chapter 4, Methodology and Method, offers a critical review of the methodological practices, logistics and ethical considerations involved in using blogs and *wikis* as the tool through which (digital) ethnographic inquiry can take place. Discussion will also take place regarding the adoption of a virtual/digital ethnographic perspective for the research and the implications this has for the reconceptualization of traditional ethnographic notions of field, place, presence and 'being there'. This inquiry is located, specifically, within the emerging international epistemological tradition of digital ethnography (Markham, 1998; Hine, 2000; Murthy, 2008; Kozinets, 2010). My research contributes to this field by clearly demonstrating the usefulness and appropriateness of data constructed in this way to help explore insights on the nature of teacher identity and new teacher practice. For some commentators, a movement towards a digital ethnography opens up the possibility to refine and redefine the object of ethnographic inquiry itself (Dominguez *et al*, 2007; Murthy, 2008). I argue here that blogs provide a useful space within which to capture stories of new teachers of their emerging practices and in doing so, my research is located within a growing international debate exploring what ethnography *is* in the light of challenges made by ethnography 'going digital'. To do this, I explore issues around the use of blogging as a tool for data capture, the logistics and ethics involved and the issues and challenges faced with mediated online research spaces. I put forward the argument in this chapter that using digital methods and the creation of an online community is a useful epistemological tool to support teacher growth through collaborative and participatory research practices.

Chapter 5, Findings, develops the ethnographic inquiry. In agreeing with the claim that 'successful' teacher education has contained within it a pedagogy of identity transformation (a 'pedagogy of identity development' (Danielewicz,

2001: 1)) I present the reflective practices of the novice teachers through the blogging. The novice teachers explore how they go about teaching, the decisions they make and how these are affected by relationships with others. I present this data under the themed headings of: identity, pedagogic practice and relationships with others. Craft is seen as having a central role to play here in the ethical practice many novices seek to develop and in the identities they create, and in the frustrations, anxieties and barriers some face. For some participants, these craft identities enable novices to grow and at times accommodate the change around them. For others secure and stable craft identities allow and inform acts of resistance to cultural normalising. For some a commitment to ethical craft practice leads to tension, discord and non-compliance with the institutional cultures they work within. Central to this debate is the usefulness of the craft lens to better explore and understand the nature of the complex beginnings of novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector.

The final chapter, *Chapter 6, Conclusions*, explores the implications of this research for a teacher education that 'insists on identity'. The usefulness of the craft lens provides a framework within which it is possible to reframe understandings of the experiences of those new to the lifelong learning sector. This research is both significant and timely: the lifelong learning sector in England is still undergoing a period of rapid flux and has been for the past two decades (Lucas, 2004). Within this context, this research explores the little-researched and infrequently adopted use of emergent Web2.0 technologies for data capture and in doing so, in enabling lifelong learning novice teaching practitioners to reflect within virtual communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Through the lens of craft, new knowledge is constructed making more intelligible the identity and pedagogic practices and choices of novice teachers and making complex previous understandings of the 'easy' and 'painful beginnings' (Huberman, 1989) of those in the lifelong learning sector. Taken together, the findings generated from this digital ethnographic approach suggest that the craft theoretical framework can contribute rich understanding of the struggles, challenges and successes of novice teachers in their early-career practice.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This research is timely, given how the lifelong learning sector in England is undergoing massive transformation (Lucas, Nasta and Rogers, 2011; Lucas, 2013), and yet is positioned in a 'policy limbo': no legal remit for teachers to be 'qualified' formally and yet still open to the quality and standards measures associated with Ofsted inspections (Avis, 2009; 2016; Avis *et al*, 2012; Taubman, 2015). This policy limbo is also a professional limbo – positioning the sector on a 'fuzzy' (Harrison *et al*, 2003) boundary to the schools sector while nonetheless operating with institutional and sector cultures of performativity and managerialism (Gleeson *et al*, 2005; Busher, James and Piela, 2015). In this chapter I will start by considering the lifelong learning sector of England as the context within which the discussions of craft, identity and practice raised by this thesis play out before then exploring how previous research theorises teacher identity and professional practice in this context. It will be demonstrated from the literature how, as the landscape of lifelong learning in England is being redrawn, practices and opportunities are being reconceptualised and reframed: spaces opening up for practitioners to redefine what they do (Rikowski, 2001). In this there is the recognition, from the post-modern turn in social theory, that identity construction is fluid, unstable, ambiguous and fragmented, echoing similar lines of debate in the literature on English schools (Ball, 1990; 2003; 2004; Hargreaves, 1994; 2000; Turvey and Anderson, 2010; Ball and Olmedo, 2013). This literature however underplays the role that ethical practice as craft practice can have for the identity constructions of novice teachers and how this helps to explain the diverse experiences novice teachers encounter.

2.2 Context and setting: the Lifelong Learning sector in England

This research takes place within the changing context of lifelong learning in England, with current and on-going 'reform' agendas affecting practice in this sector and the professional lives of novice teachers entering the sector for first employment. These changes can be located back to (over) two decades of (rapid) reform (Nasta, 2007; Lucas, Nasta and Rogers, 2011; Lucas, 2013; 2014). When speaking of 'workplace reform' it is possible to identify a series of fluid and overlapping policies and changes in the sector covering: incorporation; the creation of the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) teacher training standards (Lucas, 2004; Lucas and Nasta, 2009; Avis, 2016); the introduction of performance pay; the workplace reform of the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act; the change of Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) funding to the Learning Skills Council (LSC); the whole-scale and widespread curriculum change of Curriculum 2000; the creation of the Institute of Learning (IFL); the rise of the Common Inspection Framework to also cover lifelong learning institutions; the work of Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), established after the 2004 DfES reforms; and, the subsequent creation and then slow erosion of the Institute for Learning and the 14-19 agenda(s). Through this time of reform, the sector has seen a policy U-turn in terms of a commitment to '(professional) standards' in the sector for teachers culminating in the 2012 Lingfield Review which recommended the removal/change of the 2007 professional standards following the 2004 creation of LLUK.

In 2007 alignment of teacher training to new professional standards was made compulsory for all entering the workplace. Some critics of the introduction of 'new standards' (linked to the establishment of the IFL) saw the process of regulation and standardization as deprofessionalism in the absence of a professional code of ethics (Plowright and Barr, 2012). Tensions in 'dual professionalism' long associated with the FE teaching workforce [with teachers being both 'teachers' and 'VET professionals'] were seen as a potential source

of fragmentation that a solid professional identity as a qualified teacher might mitigate against (Plowright and Barr, 2012). However, in only 6 years, this policy was revised, with the (even newer) professional standards for the sector in 2013 (Avis, 2016). The sector no longer requires a formally trained teaching workforce, and qualification being up to the employer (and therefore market forces) to decide (Lingfield, 2012; LSIS, 2013) with Ofsted having a remit to, '...check that employers ensure that their staff are properly qualified and their skills are kept up-to-date is fulfilled, and that Ofsted monitors reliably the qualifications of FE lecturers (in both teaching and their professional area)' (Lingfield, 2012: 6).

Post-Lingfield, the sector has therefore experienced the removal of a once compulsory 'qualified teacher status' (known as QTLS) for the sector, while the primary and secondary sector's 'Qualified Teacher Status' (QTS) continues albeit with a more vigorous commitment to school-based training. For the lifelong learning sector, the removal of legal qualification reflects the '...core belief that staff training, professional updating, competency and behaviour are essentially matters between employer and employee' (Lingfield, 2012: 6).

Finally, these changes culminate with the establishment of The Society for Education and Training (SET) to replace the IFL (Avis, 2009; 2016; Avis *et al*, 2012).

Previously Randle and Brady (1997) have noted the lack of attention given to the sector at the time by academic research and the lack of exposure of the scarcity of opportunities for this research to receive scrutiny by others. Recently Petrie (2015) continues this view in part, suggesting that a continued lack of public scrutiny has enabled successive New Right and New Labour governments in the United Kingdom (UK) to '...subject it to a market-managed ideology' (Petrie, 2015: 3). Claims to 'improve' the sector and claims of the importance of the sector for both global competition and the (flexible, globalized, post-modern) skills and knowledge economy has been significant in New Right and New Labour policy since the 1990s onwards (Bathmaker and

Avis, 2005a; Avis, 2016). The sector operates with an ideological and discursive claim of being somehow 'unique' – especially positioned in significance for the global economy and different from other educational sectors (Gleeson *et al*, 2005). Avis *et al* (2011) suggest that the weak links and uneasy formal connections between lifelong learning and other educational sectors in the wider UK give the sector a unique position. In addition, the isolation of the sector is also demonstrated by a frequent lack of regard in policy with European policy agendas on lifelong learning (Avis *et al*, 2012). Busher, James and Piela (2015) have commented that the sector context makes lifelong learning not 'just' another sector, between school and higher education, but rather that pedagogy and practice are uniquely realized in different ways to other education provision in the UK. Nonetheless, despite its potential uniqueness both in policy and also in the research literature, the lack of a shared pedagogical basis for practice (Salisbury *et al*, 2009) beyond a broad commitment to 'student-centred' approaches leaves the sector potentially marginalized (Dziubinski, 2015). In addition, Orr (2009) notes the contradictions and problems of workload in the sector potentially excluding innovation and experimentation in place of the 'need to quickly cope', leading to more mundane and conservative practice. Within this context, a number of key research themes have emerged, as explored next.

2.2.1 Key themes

The research literature through key moments of lifelong learning sector reform and change (outlined above) has spoken of the loss of control; the intensification of labour; increase in administration; marginalisation of teachers' autonomy; and, the stress of 'accountability' (Avis, 1999; Avis, Kendal and Parsons, 2003). These themes continue in the literature in more recent research (Colley, 2010; Lucas, 2013; O'Leary, 2015; Avis, 2016). The literature certainly demonstrates how many join the sector with aspirations of social justice (Avis, 2009; 2016); it also clearly demonstrates how many teachers in the sector feel undermined and overwhelmed by institutional cultures (Coffield, 2015; Daley, 2015). Yet, building upon this literature, the relationships between tacit knowledge, teacher learning, craft and ethical practice could be further drawn.

To demonstrate the recent concerns of the field, drawing upon Hillier (2015), it is possible to note that current lifelong learning literature often applies one of four lenses through which the sector is framed: identity, agency, tension and deliberative spaces. In light of this, research has previously explored: the affects and consequences of performativity (Avis and Bathmaker, 2004; Whitehead, 2005); the dominance of 'technicism' (Hodkinson, 1998); the challenges of entering employment contexts (Avis and Bathmaker, 2006); increasing performativity cultures (O'Leary, 2013; 2015) the experiences of pre-service trainee teachers in the sector (Wallace, 2002) and the nature of the 'dual identities' constructed by in-service trainees (Orr and Simmons, 2010); discourses around the nature of teacher education in the lifelong learning sector (Dixon *et al*, 2010); the changing nature of professionalism (Gleeson, Davies and Wheeler, 2005); and the nature of communities of practice in the sector (Bathmaker and Avis, 2006; Colley, 2010; Cushing, 2012). Some of these concerns – identity, transition, and professionalism – are also mirrored in the English schools sector literature (Day *et al*, 2007; Day and Gu, 2010). Much of the research into the lifelong learning sector is within the context that these are 'changing times' for the sector (Jephcote, Salisbury and Rees, 2008). Within this, research explores how teachers themselves cross-boundaries, enter new contexts and 'become' and 'unbecome' (Colley *et al*, 2007) in terms of their identity (Orr, 2009; Orr and Simmons, 2010; 2011). This literature presents teacher identity as fluid and highly context-bound and as such has some similarity with the schools sector in England.

2.2.2 Neo-liberal reform

The contention here is that the lifelong learning sector in England has an uneasy role within and relationship with *both* educational reforms and policy change in general and teacher education reforms in particular over the past decade in England. This uneasy relationship is perhaps most succinctly characterised by Coffield *et al* (2008) talking in general of the sector as a '*turbulent world*'. Previous work from colleagues in the field explore this 'turbulent world' in various ways, yet all united by the recognition of the impact of neo-liberalism on policy: Dixon *et al* (2010) have drawn upon ethnographic

data to explore the exigencies of the workplace for pre-service teachers; Orr and Simmons (2011) have looked at the restrictions on practice in the sector and also noted the use of an 'apprenticeship' model of professional learning in the sector (Orr and Simmons, 2011). This literature is as diverse as the sector it investigates: for example, instead of possible deprofessionalism and alienation of the workforce, it is also possible to locate multiple discourses of professionalism operating in the wider sector (Bathmaker and Avis, 2012; Tummons, 2014; Feather, 2014) alongside multiple teacher identities (Orr, 2009). These concerns and the lived experience of teachers play-out in a workplace framed by the managerial and post-Fordist conditions of neo-liberalism, which will be explored further below.

The impact of neo-liberalism can be seen across all educational sectors in the UK in general terms through the globalisation of markets, market-based forces in education and the resulting commodification of education which positions children/pupils/learners/students as 'consumers' (Avis and Fisher, 2010). As Harvey (2005) has originally noted, the ideology and discourse of neo-liberalism has reached hegemonic proportions since in public sector policies it is a matter of 'common-sense'. In this vein, the aim of lifelong learning at least in the western world is often framed around developing 'enterprising subjects' – based upon a rhetoric of flexibility and the adaptability of skills and workforce for global demand and competition (Avis, 2009). The highly marketized neo-liberal agenda is at the heart of these policies and their impact upon education in general and lifelong learning in particular. Claims and conceptualisations of social justice as a distinctive characteristic of this sector also appear in UK governmental policy rhetoric regarding the sector (Fisher and Thompson, 2010). Yet, while the UK lifelong learning sector and the UK higher education sector both speak of social justice and of 'widening participation' this is always within the context of a framework dictated by the essential characteristics of neo-liberalism (Lauder *et al*, 2006) in the first place - of marketization, globalisation and individualism (Fisher and Thompson, 2010) and the privatization of education (Orr, 2015). Within this, prime policy drivers are: the development of 'human capital' for economic global competition (Avis, 2016); performativity and audit cultures – described by Singh (2015) as the

'datafication' of educational processes to codified outputs; and, fundamental changes to institutional governance in the lifelong learning sector that focuses upon self-regulation and institutional intra and inter competition (Gleeson *et al*, 2011; Hill, 2014; Graystone *et al*, 2015). This situation has been referred to by Bryan and Hayes (2007) as the 'McDonaldization of Further Education'.

The insight that neo-liberalism is fundamentally bound-up with performativity comes originally from Lyotard (1979) and is seen as part of the 'post-modern condition'. Using Wittgenstein's earlier notion of 'language games' (1953) to think about power, Lyotard suggests that power and 'truth' '...falls under the control of another language game, in which the goal is no longer truth, but performativity' (1979: 46). The pursuit of rational means to audit, measure and control production lead to measures where '...the only credible goal is power. Scientists, technicians, and instruments are purchased not to find truth, but to augment power' (1979: 46). With the absence of 'meta-narratives' and the only call to truth the adoption and manipulation of *petit récit* [mini narratives] this causes anxiety, tension, mistrust and risk in what Lyotard then characterises as the essential features of the post-modern condition. This is seen to open up a space within which governments and capitalist production deploys audit cultures as a means to power. The second key feature of neo-liberalism when applied to education is the rise of production and work cultures on 'post-Fordist' lines. Following Brown and Lauder (1992), post-Fordism can be conceived as an economic policy focus upon: flexibility in workforce skills and provision; global competition; niche markets; unpredictability in labour markets; individualisation; and, the focus on consumer choice. As such post-Fordism is fundamentally bound-up with the neo-liberal turn in western capitalist political structures seen since the end of the 1970s. As O'Leary notes, '...the FE sector, in particular, has a history as a testing ground for public-policy reforms' (O'Leary, 2015: 75). For some writers, it is possible to identify the development of a 'global policy field' as much in evidence in education and lifelong learning as elsewhere (Avis 2016).

Avis (2009) suggests that teacher practice under neo-liberal policy settlements foregrounds notions of trust and risk embedded within the responses of neo-liberal UK governments to global change and competition. The rhetoric of the 'flexibility' and 'adaptability' of the lifelong learning sector for global economic advance means that workplace change raises issues of accountability, assurance and identity. Avis sees this as paradoxical since '...the concern with trust and creativity and the encouragement of apparently progressive models of educational practice rest uneasily with the conditions within teachers labour' (2009: 95). The lived experience of teachers then, is often one of managerial performance and at the same time 'active subversion' (Daley, 2015: 13). On the one hand, '...teachers recognize that unacceptable limitations are being placed on their practice' and yet, '...they are not passive, nor do they theorize about liberation – they construct and experience a version of it' (Daley, 2015: 13). This discontinuity and paradoxical contrast between policy and workplace lived experience written about by Avis (2009) leads to the shifting identities of those who work in the sector (Wahlberg and Gleeson, 2003). As Daley notes, often there is a marginalization of those new to teaching in the sector, coupled with their awareness of these massive policy and structural changes: 'new teachers recognize that the way things are is not the way they have always been' (Daley, 2015: 15). In addition, literature points to the marginalisation of 'trainee teachers' in the lifelong learning sector as well. This lack of integration '...informs what is absorbed through their lived experience on placement, influencing the way in which they cope and subsequently develop (Avis, Orr and Tummons, 2010: 49).

2.3 Joining groups and crossing boundaries

In exploring how novice teachers enter new employment settings consideration needs to be given to how novice teachers are accommodated into existing cultures and practices or otherwise. To use the terminology of Heggen (2008) and Trent (2013) from the wider practice-based-learning literature, I have found

it useful to think of this as a process of 'boundary crossing'. Other commentators have adopted, albeit in a critical way, the long-recognised terminology of the 'community of practice' literature (Lave and Wenger, 1991) to explore teachers' relationships with others in the FE context (Bathmaker and Avis, 2006; Colley, James and Diment, 2007; Colley, 2010; Cushing, 2012). In doing so, Colley, James and Diment (2007) argue for a more complex theorised understanding of boundary crossing when applied to FE. Earlier evidence from Bathmaker and Avis on FE trainee teachers demonstrates how '...an overwhelmingly negative image of existing practice' (2005a: 56) makes joining of the group and notions of 'legitimacy' difficult, leading to exclusion.

Evans (2010) makes the point about work-based learning and VET professionals, drawing conceptual language from nurse education, that a 'disintegrated learning' can occur: the demands of training and work do not seem to match (or are, at least, perceived not to match). This is often a result of a failure for the workplace to recognise the needs of new entrants and trainees and to accommodate them (Bathmaker and Avis, 2005; 2012; Petrie, 2015). In comparing the work-based learning and training of teachers, social workers and nurses Heggen (2008) has likewise contended that there is a gap between professional practice and the curriculum content of training. This potential 'gap' in boundary crossing between expectations, practice and experience is also documented in the lifelong learning sector (Avis, Kendal and Parsons, 2003; Avis *et al*, 2003). Employing socio-cultural theory, Heggen argues that professionals-in-training are 'boundary crossers': they are members of different horizontal communities of practice, constructing their action and identities with a polycontextuality. Petrie (2015), drawing upon Ball and Olmedo (2103), notes the need to recognise the impact that community can play in affirming the practices and experiences of teachers in the lifelong learning sector. Drawing upon Trent (2013), in considering 'boundaries' as a metaphoric or heuristic device it is nonetheless possible to see the real-life workplace and identity consequences of 'moving from here to there' (Avis, Kendal and Parsons, 2003). For example, as Trent notes, crossing between modes of being or places of acting, '...not only represent opportunities for learning but are also potentially

conflictual, marginalizing experiences' (2013: 262). This point, but perhaps in a 'softer' way, has also been noted by Wenger (2003) who points out that the focus on boundaries brings to light difference. As Trent also suggests, the focus on boundaries when exploring teachers' work and lives '...implies the need to consider the multiple boundaries that individuals cross, that is, as they negotiate and combine' (2013: 262).

Previously Lave and Wenger (1991) have used the term 'situated learning' to describe learning that takes place within 'communities of practice'. To define: 'A community of practice is a set of relations among persons, activity and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice' (Lave and Wenger, 2002: 115). In this model, boundary crossing is a process of learning how to join since '...learning in apprenticeship is not just about learning overt knowledge and skill, but involves moving toward full participation in the socio-cultural practices of a community' (Bathmaker and Avis, 2005a: 50). In this view, 'situated learning' is undertaken where it is also applied (in practice) and is co-constructed by the meaning making and negotiation of colleagues. 'Situated learning' suggests movement into a group but critiques of Wenger (2003) challenge the underrepresented possibilities for conflict and see this as an inadequate theorisation of power (Trent, 2013). As Barton and Tusting (2005) refer to it, this is a rather 'benign' representation of the processes involved with group membership. As such, it does not take into consideration conflict and power relations (Busher, Hammersley-Fletcher and Turner, 2007). Likewise, Colley (2006) notes the possibilities for exclusion from the group, limiting the situatedness of group membership. Themselves drawing upon Bourdieu (1977), Lave and Wenger cite notions of *habitus* to describe how action and practice is framed by the '...embodied practices and cultural dispositions concerted in 'habitus' (1991: 50). Practice is located within a 'nexus of practice' whereby teachers explore who they think they are through their practice. This then, is an issue of identity formation, as explored in the next section.

2.4 Theorizing teacher identity in the lifelong learning sector in England

When thinking about teacher practice a wide range of conceptions of the teacher exists across the general education research literature from both the schools and lifelong learning sectors: as reflective practitioner (Schön, 1987); technician (Silcock, 2002); members of a situated community (Lave and Wenger, 1991); 'executive technicians' (Winch, 2011); and an even earlier view of teachers as 'restricted professionals' (Hoyle, 1974). In terms of models of teacher identity, the lifelong learning literature has been concerned with performativity (Avis and Bathmaker, 2004); 'technicism' (Hodkinson, 1998); the 'dual identities' constructed by in-service trainees (Orr and Simmons, 2010); discourses of the nature of teacher education (Dixon *et al*, 2010); professionalism (Gleeson, Davies and Wheeler, 2005); how identity and practice are formed through work-based learning (Avis *et al*, 2010); and, communities of practice in the sector (Bathmaker and Avis, 2006; Colley, 2010; Cushing, 2012). This literature has explored how teachers enter new employment settings (Avis and Bathmaker, 2006; Wallace, 2002; Jephcote, Salisbury and Rees, 2008) and in doing so form identities (Colley *et al*, 2007; Orr, 2009; Dixon *et al*, 2010; Orr and Simmons, 2010; 2011).

2.4.1 Defining terms

To frame this discussion of teacher identity I would like to initially draw upon a source outside of the lifelong learning literature. I do this as the questions asked by Danielewicz resonate here with the aims and research questions of my own thesis. Danielewicz (2001) asks 'how do students become teachers?' Danielewicz makes the claim that 'successful' teacher education has contained within it a pedagogy of identity transformation – a 'pedagogy of identity development' (2001: 1). The 'enterprise of teaching teachers' is the enterprise of 'constructing identities' (Danielewicz, 2001: 4). There is recognition in this contention that such identities co-exist with a multitude of other identities; that the variety of selves on offer to each professional-in-training exist fluidly, with

varying degrees of relevance depending upon the context and temporal location. Following Danielewicz, it is possible to argue that being 'a good teacher' is dependent upon, ultimately, knowing one's own practice and self: it is not '...methodology, or even ideology. It requires engagement with identity' (2011:3). The implication of this is that identity is more than a combination of roles and practices and good practice itself is more than a combination of practices. On a meta-level good practice is dependent upon building a recognizable sense of teacher-self. Classrooms and educational organisations are therefore sites of identity formation. This collection of identities '...are under construction as they are reformed, added to, eroded, reconstructed, integrated, dissolved or expanded' (Danielewicz, 2001: 4). In other words, '...becoming a teacher means that an individual must adopt an identity as such' (Danielewicz, 2001: 9). In this regard, learning to teach is not simply a matter of tacit knowledge or technical know-how and for teacher educators then, the implications of this is that the field must be always '...insisting on identity' (Danielewicz, 2001: 9).

Danielewicz fails to acknowledge the role that policy context plays in shaping the landscape within which teachers' identity practices are formed. Neo-liberalism (and associated post-Fordism and performativity) as a context for identity development is viewed within the literature as both a global totalitarianism (Sennett, 1997; Baudrillard, 1998; Brown, 2003) on the one hand, and yet, as opening possibilities for the re-articulation of a (reflexive modern) self (Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1994). What these writers have in common is to acknowledge the rise of unprecedented change to and challenges over self and identity and the consequences that arise from workplace and community (Studdert, 2006, Sennett, 2008). Critics of the neo-liberal workplace see the 'tyranny of the market' to led to highly corrosive cultures and practices (Bourdieu, 1998; 2003). Yet this is the context within which more recent literature speaks of the struggle, subversion and reclaiming of identity (Coffield, 2015). Kooiman (2003) makes a distinction between policy levers, drivers and narratives – all of which 'transport' discourses to those who act them out (Steer *et al*, 2007). In this, it is possible to see in the literature that all teachers,

regardless of the sector, occupy a space of mediation between policy and its settlement in practice (Vahantanen and Etelapelto, 2009). In addition, the lifelong learning sector is '...notable for its complexity' (Fisher and Simmons, 2010:7). While '...colleges are marked by their particular histories as well as and relatedly the local and regional contexts in which they are placed' (Avis, 2009: 4), nonetheless the sector as a whole is marked by a post-Fordist orientation to educational settlement and provision, itself a product of successive New Right Conservative and New Labour 'third way' policies from 1979 onwards. These continue in modern times with Coalition and Conservative governments (Avis, 2009; 2016). Writers such as Avis (2016) and Hill (2014) recognise the fluidity of practice despite the general neo-liberal framework within which all policy choices are made. Change (and in the lifelong learning sector's case often rapid and turbulent change) nonetheless '...open up and close off specific sites of struggle' (Avis, 2016: 98) which have an impact upon teachers' identity constructions.

Seeing the self as dynamic and seeing teacher identity as changing overtime is clearly well represented in the literature of the sector. For example, using an approach sympathetic with the terms of reference raised by Danielewicz above, Busher, James and Piela (2015) adopt an approach influenced by Giddens (1991) to frame identity: seeing lifelong learning teacher's identity as '...dynamic, not fixed. They [teachers] develop their projects of the self (Giddens, 1991) and their sense of agency through time' (Busher, James and Piela, 2015: 128). In addition, following Archer's (2003) morphogenetic approach to realism, it is possible to view the self as '...being constructed through discourse about the self with itself' (Busher, James and Piela, 2015: 128).

The view that identity is a concern or a 'problem' for actors in society is a product of the postmodern condition (Lyotard, 1979). As Giddens refers to it, a 'tribulation of the self' (Giddens, 1991). When conceiving identity, it is a process of 'knowing who one is', bound-up with the twin-process of knowing who others are, and knowing who one isn't. This is why the results of this thesis are

organised around identity, practice and others - they are fundamentally interrelated social practices. This is not a new insight and certainly not the exclusive theoretical product of postmodern theory. For example, within the highly modernist sociology of Simmel (1950), identity is understood herein as part of the twin locations of insiderhood and outsiderhood – both belonging somewhere and not belonging somewhere else. Following Bauman, it is possible to conceive of identity as a ‘defective jigsaw’ – a process of becoming never fully realised:

‘...you have a lot of little pieces on the table which you hope to arrange into some meaningful whole – but the image which ought to emerge at the far end of your labour is not given in advance...’ (Bauman, 2004: 48).

Echoing the notion of the *bricoleur* (Levi-Strauss, 1966), the building and shaping of identity by playing with the pieces of an identity jigsaw is a consequence of the fundamental and essential interplay between lived experience and social forces. This thesis explores this – the interplay between identity practices and lived experiences of teachers and their practice. To borrow from the schools sector literature, in this research I have found it useful to conceive teacher identity as a ‘...sense of purpose for teaching and being a teacher’ (Rex and Nelson, 2004: 1317).

Olsen (2008a) offers the following definition of identity: It stands for,

‘...the collection of influences and effects from immediate contexts, prior constructs of the self, social positioning, and meaning systems...that become intertwined inside the flow of activity as a teacher simultaneously reacts to and negotiates given contexts and human relationships’ (Olsen, 2008a: 139; also cited by Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009: 177).

This is the definition of identity that I will adopt in this thesis. It provides the opportunity to think about identity as an active construct - as an act of making-

sense of and of realizing growth and change. This operationalization of identity will be reconciled later with views of craft identity in the writings of Sennett (2008).

2.4.2 Neo-liberalism, lifelong learning and teacher identity

In exploring the lifelong learning sector's relationship to social justice, Avis (1999) has offered an interpretation of the sector where previous notions of 'proletarianisation' or 'de-skilling' are seen as lacking and limited. Avis *et al* (2001) suggest that policy shaped by claims of 'global forces' are 'pivotal' – globalised rhetoric shifts the sector away from an emphasis upon professionalism and towards one which requires '...a shift from 'teaching to learning' (Avis *et al*, 2001: 6). Previously, for Avis *et al*, much FE literature has been concerned with '...the parameters and contradictions of the competitiveness education settlement' (2003: 192). For the world of FE teaching and education, this ideological rhetoric is the claim that the FE sector has a crucial role in 'world class' competition - '...by developing the knowledge and skills of the workforce a vibrant and dynamic economy will be created, able to compete successfully in the global marketplace' (Avis *et al*, 2003: 192). There is an 'education myth' (Wolf, 2002) at play here within this settlement – that the rise of the 'knowledge economy' creates demands for increased performativity and 'standards' compliance in the FE sector. As Rikowski (2001) illustrates, there are genuine differences between governments', colleges' and employers' understandings of how these global agendas are interpreted, framed and played-out. While the FE sector is experiencing a 'renewed' focus of political attention due to the rhetoric of lifelong learning within the global narratives as above (Wallace, 2002; Avis, 2016), this would not mean that on a local stage all global forces play-out the same. Avis (2002) notes that managerialism in FE and performativity are a direct consequence of globalisation and resulting technocratic conceptualisation of the role of education in a knowledge economy. This has been fundamental within the discourses of New Labour previously, locating education '...rooted in a common-sense technicism' (Avis, 2002: 76). The hegemony of this is ultimately authoritarian – neo-Fordist compliance

dressed up as post-Fordist flexibility. And yet, there is flexibility – the fluidity of the sector is such that agents have choice on local levels.

One theme in the literature is the centrality of relationships with learners for teachers' professional identity formation. Previously Avis *et al* (2011) have noted the anxieties and tensions brought about by relationships with and conceptualisations of 'good' and 'bad' students and how these impact upon the formation of teacher practice. Likewise, earlier Colley (2006) noted the difficulties in developing and maintaining emotional relationships with students. Using Goffman's (1971) 'dramaturgical perspective', Avis *et al* suggested that acting out professional identity (in this case in relation to how to 'act' with students) results '...in a colonisation of workers' emotional life that can be potentially devitalising' (2011: 54). Linking relationship formation to the importance of social justice for teachers in the sector, Lucas (2013) notes the importance of students' well being as a key feature in the professional concerns of trainee teachers. This links to the claims of social justice those entering the sector often adopt (Avis, 2009; 2015; 2016). This is seen to be of vital significance in the formation of identity. This is, for Lucas, more than a 'dual professionalism' of teacher/vocational practitioner since it is a more '...expansive professionalism that embodies the notion of the learning professional' (Lucas, 2013: 56).

Within the above work, teacher practice and identity is seen as a site of complex struggle and this continues in more recent literature (Avis, 2009; Orr and Simmons, 2010; 2011; Bathmaker and Avis, 2012; O'Leary, 2015). For example, Coffield in commenting upon the recent work of a wide range of authors to describe the lifelong learning sector, notes that the language used to explore change in the sector over the past 10 years is evidence of both the continued 'malaise' of those working in and writing about the sector. This language deploys terms such as: 'toxic', 'oppression', 'embattled', 'punitive surveillance', 'heightened accountability', 'inauthenticity', 'fabrication',

'fragmented knowledge', 'damaged and stunted lives', 'a culture of fear', 'vilified', 'animosity', 'cynicism', 'deprofessionalization', 'downtrodden, disheartened and disempowered', 'erosion of self-confidence', 'chaotic sector' (2015: xxiii-xxiv). Coffield *et al* (2014) have characterised the sector as suffering from 'bulimia academica': operating in highly pathological ways at the expense of those working and learning in the sector. Coffield *et al* (2014) have more recently described the FE sector as 'toxic', and in doing so have explored the highly corrosive inequalities of power operating through the cultures of managerialism in the sector (Coffield and Williamson, 2011). This is, though, but one side of the story. From the same literature, Coffield also notes the use of language such as: 'resistance', 'empowering', 'autonomy of the collective', 'principled pragmatism', 'reclaiming and reframing', 'agents of change', 're-claimed and re-energized identities' (2015: xxiv). From these writers (Petrie, 2015; Daley, 2015; Orr, 2015; Taubman, 2015) we see a sector both imposing from above and struggling and subverting from below: a sector where workplace reform is 'felt' by the lived experiences of teachers as potentially highly marginalising but yet nonetheless spaces are created wherein attempts at autonomy and reflexivity take place. Page (2015), indebted to the insights on critical leadership theory by Collinson (2014), rejects easy dichotomies between manager and teacher in the FE sector, while nonetheless recognizing the prevalence of managerialism. Again, following Petrie (2015) and Coffield and Williamson (2011), managerial forces can be subverted and collusion to market forces is not straightforwardly automatic for those in the sector who do occupy managerial roles. Using McCulloch's (2011) definition, if a profession is characterised as autonomous and self-directed with an ethical approach to practice and authoritative knowledge claims ('expertise'), then professionalism in the lifelong sector in England is highly questionable. As such, professionalism needs to be reframed and reformed (Tummons, 2014; Hafez, 2015; Boocock, 2015; Crawley, 2015; Taubman, 2015).

2.4.3 Professionalism and identity

Through the period of sectorial change described above, many commentators note the contested nature of 'professionalism' (Elliott, 1998; Avis and Bathmaker, 2009; Bathmaker and Avis, 2005a; 2005b; Bathmaker, 2013; Colley *et al*, 2007; Robson, 2006; Crawley, 2015). Concerns with the (de/re)professionalism of teachers is a concern not just within the literature of this sector, but in education in the UK in general, and linked to this are issues around the legitimacy of knowledge and curriculum construction (Beck and Young, 2005). Crawley (2015) operationalizes professionalism as: responsibility for a social purpose; autonomy; public accountability; and, selfless commitment to expertise. Linked to this is an orientation towards 'public good'. This echoes connections other writers have made between aspirations of those working in the sector towards 'social justice' (Avis, 2015). Professionalism is not simply a highly contested term in the literature in general (Robson, 1998; 2006; Hafez, 2015), but changes and reversals to the qualified status of teachers in lifelong learning in England lead to uncertainties regarding how the workforce frame their professional identities and practice over time (Gleeson, Davies and Wheeler, 2005; Orr and Simmons, 2010; 2011; Lucas, 2013; Tummons, 2014). Robson (1998) has referred to the profession as 'in a state of crisis' at the start of the reforms caused by the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act. While a great deal of policy rhetoric places emphasis upon the importance of the quality of learning and teaching for the lifelong learning sector, at the same time we have the withdrawal of the need to be qualified (Tummons, 2014; Crawley, 2015). This continued legacy of reform in lifelong learning policy is an erosion of professionalism (Guile and Lucas, 1999; Lucas, Nasta and Rogers, 2011; Lucas, 2013). Given reversals to 'qualified status' this can be interpreted as a '...return to their voluntarist past' (Lucas, 2013: 389), with teachers in the sector positioned as pedagogic underdogs and lacking in professional authority. Lucas notes that prior to the late 1990s professional (re)training of these teachers, teacher education was *ad hoc*, haphazard and reflected '...the diverse nature of FE and the marginalization of vocational and technical education' (2013: 389). Reform under New Labour creating (new) professional standards with a legal

mandate was one that in turn brought about sweeping performativity into the sector (Avis, 2009; 2016; Lucas, 2013). FE might have been positioned as essential in policy rhetoric for economic growth at the time (Orr, 2009; Robson, 2009), but FE teachers were still marginalized technicians. While continued reform through the early to late 2000s has seen changes to iterations of professional standards, as well as the legality of professional status, Lucas (2013) sees the current reversal of these requirements as a 'unique trajectory' in educational policy. While not specifically citing post-Fordism, a number of writers point to managerialism and a loss of autonomous control in the light of increased quality/accountability measures in the sector due to changes in 'standards' (O'Leary, 2013; Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2014) and the key role changes to 'observational processes' have played in increased surveillance and subsequently in identity formation (O'Leary, 2013). Changes in the legal requirements of 'qualified status' in the sector affects the lived experiences of those working within the sector. In turn such change has consequences for the biographies and identities developed by practitioners since 'standards' often lead to prescription and an overemphasis upon technical competence (Lucas, Nash and Rogers, 2011).

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I draw upon themes from the lifelong learning literature while addressing a wide range of issues which are the product of the hyper-rapid policy context of the sector itself. These practices explore professionalism, control, autonomy and managerial cultures and as such have a consequence for teacher identity. I argue that while building upon previous approaches, it is nonetheless possible to readdress the ways novice teachers reconcile their practice with the formation of new identities. In so doing, these approaches have to date underestimated the role and usefulness of the notion of craft for exploring identity and practice. The next chapter, *Theorizing 'Craft'*, explores this possible alternative theorization.

Chapter 3 Theorizing 'Craft'

3.1 Introduction

As demonstrated by the literature review in the previous chapter a key challenge for novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England is to build identities during unsettling times of reform and renewal (Colley *et al*, 2007; Orr and Simmons, 2010; 2011; Dixon *et al*, 2010). What draws together the schools sector and lifelong learning literature is a shared concern with the relationships between professionalism, teacher identity, and teacher practice and teacher knowledge base. In these existing debates on teacher education and teacher learning and practice there also already exists a variety of previous research exploring the role of tacit learning (Polanyi, 1958) and the 'craft of teaching' (Marland, 1975; Tom, 1980; Coldron and Smith, 1999; Hagger and McIntyre, 2006). At the same time, debates around the policy context of English ITE also draw upon notions of craft (Hayes 2010; Gove 2010a; 2010b; Derrick 2011), as do responses to neo-liberalism from within the field of teacher education (SCETT, 2011; Orchard and Winch, 2015).

These theoretical frameworks across both schools and lifelong learning literature characterize craft as an atheoretical attempt to conceptualize teacher practice and learning, ultimately leading to the separation of the university from teacher education and priority given to 'apprentice learning' at the expense of 'theory'. The critique from the field of ITE sees this as an attempt to deprofessionalise, mirroring existing literature on apprenticeship-style learning for teachers (Jarvis, 2005). Much of the current literature that rejects craft as a stable source for teacher identity and practice encourages a dualism between: practice/theory, workplace/university, theory/craft (Winch, 2011; Smith, Hodson and Brown, 2013; Brown, Rowley and Smith, 2015; Orchard and Winch, 2015). In constructing dualisms this literature avoids alternative notions of craft and its

relevance to teachers' practices and lives. While neo-liberalism proposes such a separation and the teacher education 'defence' argues against this, both extremes in the debate nonetheless view craft in this one-dimensional way. While this policy context comes originally from concerns with the schools sector in England, the inherent trends towards practice-based experience and the removal of the need for university education are as much a feature of the lifelong learning sector as they are schools. The previous work adopting the term 'craft' in the literature (Leinhardt, 1990; Grimmer and MacKinnon, 1992; Hagger and McIntyre, 2006) fails to consider the role of teachers in the lifelong learning sector and also other interpretations of the term.

In this chapter I shall critically outline the neo-liberal use of craft before considering the teacher education response. I will explore alternative uses of 'craft' within teacher education and also from a wider sociological and philosophical cannon before turning to the work of Richard Sennett that, I shall argue, is an appropriate source for a reconsideration of the term.

3.2 Neo-liberalism and craft

Arguments suggesting that teaching and learning to teach are 'crafts' have gained strength in English education policy over the last six years. These concepts of craft are often associated with teacher practice, learning and training in the schools sector, presenting school-based practice (the 'craft') as more valuable than university-based theory. While this policy context explicitly presents school teaching as a craft, by implication given changes to professionalism and teacher learning, they also apply to the lifelong learning sector in England (Derrick, 2011; Lucas, 2013). While the use of craft in policy rhetoric is associated with Michael Gove, UK Secretary of State for Education (Gove, 2010a; 2010b), it has been present in comments also made by John Hayes, Minister for Business and Skills (Hayes, 2010). For Gove, '... teaching is a craft and it is best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or

woman' (2010a). John Hayes suggests: '... the instinctive value we feel for craft must be reflected by our education system ... this must be the age of the craftsman' (2010). This is a very 'common sense' notion of 'craft' and of what practices derive from it. Gove suggests,

'...I also believe that teaching is a craft... you learn how to be a great teacher by observing already existing great teachers and, in turn, by being observed yourself' (Gove, 2010b).

This statement provides a clear image of teacher professional learning as 'an apprenticeship'. Gove also notes,

'...one of the problems that we have as a society, which is that we think that craft is somehow less worthy of respect than academic excellence. The point I want to make is that teaching at its best actually combines both: a love of the life of the mind and an appreciation that teaching is, in the truest sense of the word, a vocation—something that you learn by doing and through practice' (2010b).

Positioning teaching as an apprenticeship in this paradigm also positions practical learning as the antithesis of theory. In this way, university ITE is seen as an illegitimate source of theoretical knowledge that '...drew gifted young teachers away from their vocation and instead directed them towards ideologically driven theory' (Gove, 2013). This (re)deployment of the term 'craft' within the English neo-liberal context was at the ideological heart of the arguments within the (then) UK Coalition government's teacher education reform proposals as laid-out in 'The Importance of Teaching' (DfE, 2010). As such, this context represents what Furlong and Lawn refer to as a 'turn to the practical' (2011: 6), and has affected significant change in schools, teacher education and teacher professionalism.

3.2.1 Implications and the reach of neo-liberalism

The current move 'towards the practical' and the dominance of school-based and college-based teacher training and learning impacts upon how teacher

education itself views theory and research and justifies or defends its role in teachers' professional learning. This process of justification is made in the light of critiques of and challenges to the legitimate value and authority of university-based teacher education (Smith, Hodson and Brown, 2013). In the lifelong learning sector the removal (and reversal) of a version of qualified teacher status places questions over the professional nature of teachers and restrictions on the source of their knowledge base and opportunities for practice (Gleeson, Davies and Wheeler, 2005; Orr and Simmons, 2011a; 2011b; Lucas, 2013; Tummons, 2014). 'Craft' becomes synonymous with 'apprentice' and therefore positions teachers as technicians (Jarvis, 2005; Orchard and Winch, 2015). Philpott (2015), following Shimahara (1988), in recognising that alternative definitions of craft exist, notes that in Japan craft and apprentice models of teacher learning are the dominant paradigm. While higher education is not used in Japan to support teacher education, cultures around school collaboration and peer observation create a very different policy and institutional climate than in England. As Philpott suggests, while for some notions of craft are in counter-distinction to being a 'profession' it is still possible to conceive '...craft knowledge as a way to strengthen the status of teaching' (2015: 65). In older conceptions of craft it is '...activity defined by applying known procedures to routine situations' (Philpott, 2015: 64, summarising Shulman, 1986). Philpott argues that being a professional is often seen as having a 'less routine fit' between knowledge, skills, routine, and the mundane; a more complex approach to problem-solving.

In the neo-liberal view, craft is firmly located in the mundane, and as such it is individualized – reducing and removing community and professional association. Theory and practice are separated, but so too are practitioners. This is to the detriment of practice since '...anyone who does not incorporate the theory in his work can only arrive at a mere illustration of a concept or an idea' (Gielen, 2013: 60). Adams (2011) notes that conceptualisation of 'craft' was not a positioning of a collective craft but rather, of '...pedagogy as individual craft and pedagogy as individual performance' (467). The individualisation of this atheoretical craft conception fits cultural regimes in schools and colleges of accountability and performativity. Ball (2004) calls this

'social barberism' and Lyotard (1979) refers to 'coercive autonomy'. For Gielen (2013) the separation of 'theory' or 'the academy' with 'practice' is part of the 'rush of new capitalism' in late modernity and fundamental to the neo-liberal project.

These interpretations of craft are views not solely on the nature of teacher practice but also have implications for how teacher learning is seen, and for the legitimacy of the sources of teacher knowledge base. As such they shape university, school and college responses to the ways in which pre-service and in-service learning opportunities are created. They lend legitimacy to practice-based professional learning practices over other routes (Orchard and Winch, 2015; Brown, Rowley and Smith, 2015). While neo-liberal policies are not the only interpretation of teaching as craft, they have a dominance and significance in the current literature. 'Craft' may allow for recognition of the importance of complex practice and significant professional identity change, but this meaning is now lost in much of the literature despite being present in earlier work (see Hagger and McIntyre, 2006). While Govian views position craft as 'no less worthy', craft is nonetheless separated out from scholarly activity. This separation leads to further entrenchment within policy of the theory/practice dualism within both the schools and lifelong learning sector literature. This dualism is applied to both teachers' learning and also the curriculum taught to learners – a wider process of the reframing of the value and nature of vocationalism and professionalism in the light of a theory/practice divide (Bathmaker, 2013; Hordern, 2014; Tummons, 2014).

3.2.2 Conceptualisations of craft in a European context

While the scope of this thesis is the lifelong learning sector in England, it is useful to also explore views on craft conceptualizations from the schools sector. In recognition of the congruence of these policy contexts a brief overview will be provided here of contemporary uses of the term craft in some European literature. This is not intended as an exhaustive review, but rather it recognizes

the similarities and differences in neo-liberalism across different settings and contexts. At a European level the claim is made that, ‘...when teaching is considered simply as a static craft, there will be reduced incentives for professional learning’ (European Commission, 2015: 28). Using the distinction developed by Hoban (2002) between craft, labour, profession and art, this European perspective warns against narrow conceptualizations of what is a complex professional learning process and activity. However, despite recognition given to its ‘complex nature’ this view nonetheless continues to conceive craft itself in a limited way, viewed in opposition to a more fully realized ‘professionalism’. For example, the report suggests,

‘...when teaching is seen as a profession (where teaching is considered as an adaptive process based on professional autonomy, responsibility and norms and also personal judgement) (see Biesta, 2014) or as an art (where teaching is considered as a continuous creative process of design and reflection), a teaching career is more likely to be an attractive and stimulating option’ (European Commission, 2015: 28).

This again positions craft as the antithesis to deep professional practice, echoing concerns of writers in the schools context (such as Orchard and Winch, 2015) and the lifelong learning sector in England (Surman, 2011; Hayes, 2011; Noble-Rogers, 2011). Caena notes multiple conceptions of teacher practice within cross-European education systems and policy: ‘the teacher as instructional manager; caring person; expert learner; cultural and civic person’ (2011: 2). Yet, despite pluralism, there is recognition that ‘...the predominant teacher paradigm, globally, seems to be the clinician-professional model’ (Caena, 2011: 2) which other writers have also commented upon (Socket, 2008). More broadly, the OECD report ‘Teachers Matter’ (2005) points to the pressing need for commonality, even within this dominant ‘clinician-professional’ paradigm, over the definition of teacher skills and professional knowledge amongst European governments. In this view the English neo-liberal conception of ‘craft’ is one but many diverse attempts to frame teacher knowledge within this dominant paradigm. Despite pluralism, and diverse definitions, Caena observes that,

‘...recently, international scholarly consensus seems to converge on the definition of competences – also defined as capacities - as basic requirements for teaching, articulated in knowledge, craft skills and dispositions’ (2011: 8).

Yet again, though, this is an exclusively narrow conception of craft (Williamson McDiarmid and Clevenger-Bright, 2008). It, like the English neo-liberal model, sees craft as simply a set of ‘competences of doing’, failing to appreciate the moral dimensions behind artful and skilful professional practice as identified in other literature (Coldron and Smith, 1999 and Hagger and McIntyre, 2006; Sennett, 2008; Frayling, 2011; Derrick, 2011).

3.3 Conceptions of craft in the teacher education literature

As demonstrated above, ‘craft’ ideas applied to teacher learning and professional practice are highly controversial given neo-liberal rhetoric. But this term is in use across a wide variety of educational contexts. To unpack this usage, and to explore how the teacher education literature uses this term, I will return here to earlier teacher education models of craft. The use of the term craft from the existing literature has previously covered a wide range of geographical contexts: Japan (Shimahara, 1998); England (Brown and McIntyre, 1993); the Netherlands (Verloop *et al*, 2001); and, America (Greene, 1984; Grimmett and MacKinnon, 1992). While this literature writes within a schools sector perspective I will use the debates here to support the argument that a reconsideration of this term is needed to enable thinking about the lifelong learning sector.

3.3.1 Craft and professional identity and practice

What unites this literature is that it rejects craft as the basis for teacher knowledge base. Instead, professional practice is rooted in professional experience. More recently, this narrow conception of craft continues when applied to the lifelong learning sector in England, as demonstrated by the work of the Standing Committee for the Education and Training of Teachers (SCETT) and the positioning of their ‘In Defence of Teacher Education’ (2011). For

example, Surman argues that ‘...teaching is a real profession, rooted in subject-knowledge, rather than simply being a ‘craft’ (2011: 7). In the same document Blower (2011) argues that ‘...we must accept that teaching is more than simply a craft; teaching is a highly skilled profession’ (13). This is a narrow and very restrictive view of what a craft is and can be. Continuing this narrow and restrictive view of craft, Brown, Rowley and Smith (2015), in their review of school-based teacher education from the English schools sector (referred to as a ‘Schools Direct’ model), write:

‘The push to a greater emphasis upon school-based practice and knowledge is also reconfiguring how trainee teachers experience and understand practice-based pedagogical knowledge, or put more simply the relationship between theory and practice. Increasingly, teaching is conceived in craft-based, technicist terms’ (7).

This view is characteristic of the unsatisfactory conceptual dualism that much of the literature creates between hand/mind and practice/theory. This same point is continued by Winch who views craft knowledge as a concern with ‘technical recipes’ (2011: 24). These concepts of craft, which conflate craft with the ‘technical’, are seen by these writers to be a further feature of the general ‘turn to the practical’ as noted above (Furlong and Lawn, 2011). In this view craft is separated from theory, removing research and the legitimacy of the university from the teacher knowledge base. This view of craft as reducing teachers to the technical is seen to be the consequence of neo-liberal post-Fordist work practices in the English education system. It is,

‘...strengthened by increasing prescription and performativity measures, which require teachers to present and shape knowledge in particular ways. Within this context, conceptions of the relationship between theory and practice have been progressively replaced by conceptions of practice that integrate situated conceptions of theory responsive to the needs of practice. Furthermore, many re-conceptualisations of teacher education have privileged practical components to the detriment of theory and analysis’ (Brown, Rowley and Smith, 2015: 7).

This view held by critics of neo-liberal reform from both the schools sector and also the lifelong learning sector in England suggests that if seen as a craft then teaching is reduced in its professional standing. For example, Winch (2011) reapplies the earlier notion of a 'restricted professional' (Hoyle, 1974) and comments that the teacher-as-craft worker has '...no interest in theoretical knowledge and whose practice is based on experience and intuition, rather like that of a traditional craft worker' (Winch, 2011: 18). In this view, being a craft is deprofessionalising since '...craft work does not involve the application of theory to practice' (Winch, 2011: 17), and furthermore, '...craft workers learn their trade through apprenticeship' (Winch, 2011: 17). In this view and later continued in the arguments of Orchard and Winch (2015), this (neo-liberal) notion of craft is conceived of three elements: 'mastery of subject', 'personal authority' and 'situated understandings'. This leads Orchard and Winch to conclude that '...[while they] agree that all three of these craft elements are essential to good teaching. We differ from the proponents of the craft-based account in thinking they are necessary but not sufficient' (2015: 13). Again, this is a narrow view of craft that limits the term to 'common-sense' that is 'situated' in an apprenticeship of experience. Present in this argument is the dualism between theory/practice, exemplified when Orchard and Winch suggest that

'...this is not to deny that some common sense or intuitive judgments may turn out in the end to be well founded. However, intuition should not be allowed to overshadow the value of more considered responses, where a teacher's understanding of a particular situation is grounded in other aspects of knowledge, like technical know-how and theory' (2015: 14).

In adopting the Gramscian notion of 'good sense' (Gramsci, 1971) as opposed to 'common-sense', Orchard and Winch argue, '...the professional teacher is able to judge right action in various school and classroom contexts from a more reliable basis for judgment than intuition or common sense' (2015: 14) which

positions in their argument craft-work as unprofessional and the neo-liberal usage of craft as an attempt to deskill and to deprofessionalize. Following Orchard and Winch (2015) and Brown, Rowley and Smith (2015), I agree that the use of craft in neo-liberal policy limits teachers' professional roles and identities and deskills. However, it is also possible to see craft in an extended way, and to move beyond these restrictive definitions. I will present alternative craft accounts in what follows, but will first provide an overview of what I call here the 'technical-rational craft view'.

3.3.2 The dominant model of craft: The 'technical-rational view of craft'

The arguments above have drawn together a common view of craft from neo-liberalism and schools and lifelong learning research literature. While the research literature from the field of teacher education is critical and dismissive of this view of craft as a technical apprenticeship, it is a model that has nonetheless gained dominance. This meaning of craft used in the literature presented above fails to consider that craft can be involved with theory, research and 'academic' evidence and activity. As Frayling (2011) suggests,

‘...the common sense definition of the word ‘craft’ seems clear enough: an activity which involved skill in making things by hand; derived from the old English *craeft* - meaning strength or skill. But on closer inspection the word becomes more and more difficult to pin down’ (Frayling, 2011: 9).

These interpretations of craft and the policy rhetoric surrounding them contribute to shaping current performativity cultures in education. They simplify and misdirect a complex notion. Or, they make craft seem antiquated - a looking back at a more simpler time. In doing so they miss the connections between ‘head and hand’, but also mask the difficulties of the modern workplace - at times an antithesis to a craft aesthetic. This model of craft is characterized by an emphasis upon technical-know-how presented in opposition to an evidence-base drawn from theory and research. It emphasizes a number of elements: an ‘apprenticeship of observation’; individualized practice; situated decision-making; teacher authority based in situated competence; privilege given to

'common-sense' explanations; the distancing of theoretical knowledge; an emphasis upon intuition; and, professional learning located purely in exposure to practical experience. This model of craft is itself as much a product of the post-Fordist cultures in schools and lifelong learning workplaces as it is an ideological justification for them (Surman, 2011; Blower, 2011). The prevalence of this model in policy, schools-based ITE and research literature sees craft in terms that serve managerial cultures and performance standards (Tummons, 2014). But as Frayling notes, '...(C)raftsmanship is assailed on all sides by - among other tendencies - flexible working, portfolio careers, multi-tasking, short-termism, quick-fix, training, suspicion of expertise' (2011: 14). In this view, and in the view of Sennett (2008) explored further below, craft is defined, deployed and devalued within a capitalist workplace due to the inherent nature of capitalist production producing performativity cultures. This is a long-standing argument. For example, Ellsmore (2005) illustrates how educational theory is in the demise due to the 'victory' of neo-liberal discourses of managerialism and 'efficiency' dominating how teachers see both teaching and themselves. In this way a 'practical competence' is seen as more important than skilful manipulation of theory and its application to practice. McLelland (1996) previously warns the teaching profession to ignore theory at its 'peril' whereas earlier still Hargreaves (1994) sees the decline of educational theory within notions of teacher professionalism as further example of the post-modern condition. Current teacher education literature in England notes that,

'...the prevailing ideology positions teaching as essentially a craft rather than an intellectual activity, meaning that teacher training is viewed as an apprenticeship, best located in the workplace' (Brown, Rowley and Smith, 2015: 11).

However, my argument here is two-fold: firstly, that as a professional community teacher educators need to resist neo-liberal conceptualisations of teaching as 'apprentice', yet, secondly, the teacher education community needs to review and revise their opinion of 'craft'. This new and alternative view of craft needs to recognize earlier literature on craft often now ignored in current

literature and values craft with a more sympathetic view, albeit in a different form to that populating recent ideological reform in England.

3.3.3 A more sympathetic view? The 'ethical view of craft'

In opposition to the technical-rational model of craft there are alternatives. As Philpott has suggested, it is time to '...reconfigure the relationship between codified knowledge and performance' (2015: 68). While Philpott acknowledges the alternative view of craft provided by Sennett, this is still reduced to a model of apprenticeship whereby novices copy the practices of the more experienced. This claim, albeit recognizing the role of tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1958), still fails to recognise the role of theorization ('espoused' or 'in-use' (Schön, 1991)) in supporting the tacit. It also fails to explore the potential for the craft practice to help novices resist cultural normalizing where practices are not of appropriate pedagogic value. Conversely, The General Teaching Council for Scotland's 'Teachers' Professional Knowledge' discussion paper adopts the ideas of craft in much more favourable terms when applied to teacher education and teacher practice and professional learning (GTC Scotland, 2014), providing a strong critique of English Coalition government's use of the term 'craft' (Gove, 2010a; 2010b; 2013) while still arguing for 'turning afresh to the practical'. The GTC Scotland make a clear statement on the need to 'rescue' and 'make complex' notions of 'craft': rather than setting up craft as being in 'marked contrast with the intellectual' the suggestion is rather that we can take a '...different approach, acknowledging that there are complexities in expert craft work' (2014). In this argument,

'...craft, and indeed apprenticeship, far from marking the absence of the intellectual, can disclose promising variants of intellectual activity. Crafting is often described as the making of artifacts through skilful co-ordination of hand and eye. But it is not just a matter of skill in making. Careful crafting calls for the most astute discernment' (GTC Scotland, 2014).

This more sympathetic treatment of the idea of craft by GTC Scotland, and awareness of alternative conceptualizations of the term 'craft', is often overlooked by current writers in the field from both the schools (Winch, 2011; Orchard and Winch, 2015; Brown, Rowley and Smith, 2015) and lifelong learning sectors (Hayes, 2011; Surman, 2011; Blower, 2011). For example, there is already a well-established body of work that conceives craft in terms of its links to reflective practice, espoused theorizing, and tacit knowledge (Greene, 1984; Grimmett and MacKinnon, 1992; Coldron and Smith, 1999; Hagger and McIntyre, 2006). Part of this conceptualisation comes from the recognition that teaching is a social practice made up of innumerable social encounters; that teachers' knowledge base '...is highly contextualized and is situated socially, spatially, and temporally in teachers' practice' (Feldman, 1997: 757). Within this model, Buchman (1987) has spoken of the 'folkways' of teaching. Leinhardt (1990), drawing upon both Schwab (1971) and Shulman (1986), suggests that craft knowledge – or 'wisdom of practice' – encompasses '...deep, sensitive, location-specific knowledge of teaching, and it also includes fragmentary, superstitious, and often inaccurate opinions' (Leinhardt, 1990: 18).

For Tom (1980) teaching and teacher education is described as a 'moral craft' – locating practice and decision-making within an ethical dimension. This places an emphasis upon how values are interwoven into technique. Previously, one of the most systematic attempts to apply notions of 'craft' to teacher practice and teacher learning is found within the work of Hagger and McIntyre (2006) for whom there already exists a '...rich and expert professional craft knowledge' (79) identified as follows: Knowledge is embedded within practice (it is 'everyday' and in this sense is located within a *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977; 1990); craft knowledge is common across all practitioners – there is something shared by the community within its meaning-making; individual teachers-as-craft-persons can nonetheless '...draw on an individual repertoire of craft knowledge for appropriate use in each specific situation' (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006: 34). This professional craft knowledge has relational and hermeneutic elements – it

comes from socialisation into a community of practice and as a result enables the practitioner to know one's 'self'. Mutton, Hagger and Burn have argued that teaching is '...a complex process of decision-making' (2011: 399). Within this decision-making, professionals need to know how to act and know why and how actions might impact upon quality practice. This is seen within the literature as part of the 'craft' – the active decision-making drawing upon knowledge, experience and espoused theory (Schön, 1991).

The image of professional teachers as thinking, active, and knowledgeable agents informed by a variety of sources is at odds to the technical-rational craft model presented earlier. In the previous work of Hagger and McIntyre (2006), Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) and Coldron and Smith (1999) we see the introduction of an ethical and reflective dimension to teacher craft practice. In adding a moral or ethical dimension to craft, practice becomes positioned as a question of identity:

'The key to craft, and to teaching, I suggest, is not so much what the craft worker or teacher specifically does (though this is of course very important), but the kind of person they are. The first task of craft workers, from this perspective, is to produce themselves' (Derrick, 2011: 8).

Building upon the writers above, it is possible to see craft afresh, as a means to develop skilful and informed practice with robust choices. It is also an appreciation of the sense of pleasure to come from practice. Practice that itself is reflective, reflexive and intellectually developed. Seeing pedagogic practice as a craft-choice, and in turn, seeing choices around teachers' craft practices and pedagogies as an issue of identity, draws upon notions of 'artistic connoisseurship' (Eisner 1979). Craft becomes '...the sense of understanding things, experiencing them, learning how to do them and getting tangible results' (Frayling, 2011: 16).

In this process of (re)considering craft as a model for the knowledge base of teachers, it is possible to locate ethical notions of craft developed above within a wider sociological and philosophical tradition, as will be explored in the next section.

3.4 Further alternative views of craft

To explore an alternative view of craft to that positioned by neo-liberalism, it is necessary to begin to reconsider the works of previous sociological and philosophical perspectives on craft before then locating the work of Sennett within these alternative traditions. These sources develop a view of craft as an ethical source of identity construction.

An early notion of craft as an intellectual 'vocation' is present in Weber's (2009, original 1918) discussions of the nature of science and scholarly work. Weber adopts a position based upon the recognition of the power and role of capitalism to shape intellectual labour and contextualise the conditions around which work satisfaction is set. Weber's original 1918 lecture notes that,

'...[capitalist relationships to work] will engulf those disciplines in which the craftsman personally owns the tools, essentially the library, as is still the case to a large extent in my own field. This development corresponds entirely to what happened to the artisan of the past and it is now fully under way' (2009: 131).

Weber speaks of the increasing loss of an 'inner attitude' due to the malaise of capitalist work and economic relations. When Weber discusses teaching (this 'very art is a personal gift') he uses the conception of the scientist occupying a professional space similar to that of the artist. Weber concludes,

'...in the field of science only he who is devoted solely to the work at hand has 'personality.' And this holds not only for the field of science; we

know of no great artist who has ever done anything but serve his work and only his work' (2009: 137).

This conception of a ('craft') vocation is one that offers fulfilment for those who practice it in a particular way, with a particular orientation to their relationship to work, ideas, effort and imagination. This image is also found within the notion of craft in the work of C Wright Mills (1959). Again, this is the antithesis of the neo-liberal usage of this term seen in the policy rhetoric explored above. Gane and Back (2012) note that in articulating what it means to be a scholar, Mills offers a model of '...practising intellectual life as an attentive and sensuous craft but also as a moral and political project' (2012: 404). The incorporation of theory, research, morality and ethics into a notion of craft practice is different from the 'apprenticeship' model offered by neo-liberalism:

'Scholarship is a choice of how to live as well as a choice of career; whether he knows it or not, the intellectual workman forms his own self as he works toward the perfection of his craft; to realize his own potentialities, and any opportunities that come his way, he constructs a character which has as its core the qualities of the good workman' (Wright Mills, 1959: 196).

This view presents a notion of craft that is intellectual, practical, theoretical and also based upon the 'perfection' of work.

Writing earlier than the current academic work around teacher learning, skill and knowledge and performativity, Schön (1991) also notes the relationships between craft knowledge and teaching since '...according to the Positivist epistemology of practice, craft and artistry had no lasting place in rigorous practical knowledge' (1991: 34). In the dominant technical-rational paradigm of teacher practice attempts to quantify teaching excludes an understanding of the teacher as a creative, craft practitioner. In discussing previous models of the

adoption of scientific 'rationality' as a basis for knowledge, Schön argues that reflective practice can be seen as at odds to technical rationality - it is not part of the scientific paradigm, and does not claim to be. The dominant model is that '...professional activity consists in instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and technique' (Schön, 1991: 21). And yet, '...there is a rebirth of interest in the ancient topics of craft, artistry and myth - topics whose fate Positivism once claimed to have sealed' (Schön, 1991: 48). For Schön the model left, once positivism is removed, is to embrace tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1958) within teacher's skilful action: 'Our knowing is ordinarily tacit, implicit in our patterns of action and in our feel for the stuff with which we are dealing. It seems right to say that our knowing is in 'our action'' (Schön, 1991: 49). And yet, while '...the workaday life of the professional depends on tacit knowing-in-action' (Schön, 1991: 49) there is nonetheless '...a dimension of ordinary professional work, crucially important to effective performance, which cannot be reduced to technique' (Schön, 1991: 239). In this work Schön positions a dilemma in technical-rational paradigms. When these paradigms are applied to professional learning there is a tension between 'rigour' or 'relevance' in the work of professionals - between scientific technical rationality versus practice and tacit knowledge. However, Schön argues that teachers' 'reflective practice' is a unification of these two:

'Once we put aside the model of Technical Rationality, which leads us to think of intelligent practice as an *application* [italics original] of knowledge to instrumental decisions, there is nothing strange about the idea that a kind of knowing is inherent in intelligent action' (Schön, 1991: 50).

Whereas Polanyi (1958) refers to the 'tacit', Schön refers to this as a knowing-in-action. 'Skilful performance' is a product of theory, theorization, practice and technique: 'Even when he [sic] makes conscious use of research-based theories and techniques, he [sic] is dependent on tacit recognitions, judgments, and skilful performances' (Schön, 1991: 50). Yet while professional knowledge for Schön is tacit, and situated, it is not reduced to 'mere technique'. This view has its origins in the writings of Polanyi (1958). In this view, tacit knowledge is

the opposite of explicit or ‘propositional knowledge’. In other words, tacit knowledge is that which we know how, but cannot symbolically articulate. They are not however, simply in binary opposition to each other, as current conceptions of craft tend to present:

‘While tacit knowledge can be possessed by itself, explicit knowledge must rely on being tacitly understood and applied. Hence all knowledge is either tacit or rooted in tacit knowledge. A wholly explicit knowledge is unthinkable’ (Polanyi, 1958: 144).

3.4.1 Two models – a summary

In considering the writings of Weber, Mills, Schön and Polanyi an alternative notion of ‘craft’ is present. From the review above, it is possible to identify from the literature two models, one dominant and one marginalized in current discussions, as summarized in *Table 3.1* below.

Table 3.1 Two models of teachers as craft practitioners

| | Model 1 <i>A technical-rational view of craft</i> | Model 2 <i>An ethical view of craft</i> |
|-------------|---|---|
| Orientation | Narrow definition of craft | Broader definition |
| Context | English neo-liberalism Also reflected in some European literature. | Marginalized in current debates but draws upon a wider and more established body of literature. |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Site of professional learning | <p>Predominately situated in placement/employment contexts;</p> <p>Governmental policy sees practice as a priority over the role of universities;</p> <p>Leads to the removal of the university from teacher education.</p> | <p>Situated but draws upon multiple sources to frame situated contexts;</p> <p>Essential role given to theory, knowledge-exchange and research and evidence;</p> <p>University teacher education plays a fundamental role in supporting reflective and reflexive practice.</p> |
| Sources of legitimized knowledge | <p>Practice based to the exclusivity of other sites and stake-holders;</p> <p>Separation of practice and theory;</p> <p>Common-sense;</p> <p>Practice limited and standardized.</p> | <p>Communal, practice-orientated but recognizes role of other sources in reflective practice and active theorization;</p> <p>Unification of practice and theory;</p> <p>Reflective and reflexive;</p> <p>Reflects the multidimensional nature of practice.</p> |
| Basis for teacher practice and identity formation | <p>Apprenticeship;</p> <p>Technical-know-how;</p> <p>Applied decision-making in context;</p> <p>Performativity orientated;</p> <p>Competency based</p> | <p>Reflective practice;</p> <p>Tacit knowledge;</p> <p>'Artistic connoisseurship';</p> <p>Agency and decision-making;</p> <p>Creativity and playfulness;</p> <p>Ethical and moral dimension.</p> |

The themes from this analysis of these two models inform my understandings of the theorizing of craft within the work of Sennett (2008), which I will now explore.

3.5 Theorising craft through the work of Richard Sennett

The sociological writings of Richard Sennett draw upon a range of themes and offer, together, the attempt to explain 'modern life' in advanced capitalism. Working within the field of 'cultural sociology' Sennett offers theorization around civil society and the challenges to it. Within this, Sennett's work is influenced by the philosophical traditions of pragmatism, most notably Dewey (1916) (Giovannini, 2010). In writing about the progression of late/advanced capitalism (2006), Sennett offers explanations of: place, space and being in the modern industrial world (1977; 2013); perspectives on the city and an urban ecology of lives, self, identity and relationships (1977; 2013); the politics of community, togetherness and cooperation (2013); and finally, an analysis of the (working) lives of those living through and working within (advanced capitalist) workplaces (1997; 2006). What connects these together is the recognition of the consequences of globalisation upon the self and the consequences of advanced capitalism on relations, community and culture. Sennett's conceptualization of '*homo faber*', or 'man [sic] the maker' is a wide ranging project but it is within this body of work where his characterization of 'craft' is located (Sennett, 2008). Critical of Arendt's distinction between *animal laborans* and *homo faber* (Arendt, 1958), Sennett offers an image of craft work practices that encourage thinking, creativity and self-reflexivity. Rejecting Arendt's polarization of thinking/doing Sennett argues that in advanced capitalism it is still possible to see evidence of ethical, critical, creative work bodily practice that unify thinking and doing (Fadini, 2010; Mari, 2010). This is part of Sennett's wider theoretical view that culture is to be 'practiced' in order to be 'alive': that culture is framed or structured yet also acted out (Calhoun and Sennett, 2007). In this assertion Sennett recognises the debt this view of culture and cultural practices has to the work of Marx, Bourdieu's '*habitus*' (1977; 1990) and Goffman's 'presentation of self' (1971). Sennett is concerned with 'how culture

lives in practice' (Calhoun and Sennett, 2007). One such of these practices is the notion of how craft might be both waning in advanced capitalism yet as a workplace orientation and ethical aesthetic still surviving albeit in limited pockets of cultural practice.

3.5.1 Previous applications of Sennett's work

The ideas of Sennett on craft have previously been applied to: the use of technology enabled learning within a constructionist paradigm (Kennedy *et al*, 2010); teaching in higher education (Lupton, 2013); female-dominated service professions (Holmes, 2014); and, teaching practice in English language workshops (Borenzweig, 2012). In a Dutch context, exploring the nature of teachers' professional development, Vermeulen (see IPDA, 2014) has suggested that craft in the writings of Sennett might form a basis to think about teacher networks and associations to support professional learning. In uniting the ideas of craft by Sennett with the insights of Wenger on situated learning, Kiely and Davis (2009) have demonstrated the applicability of craft when exploring issues of teachers' personal growth. The use of Sennett's theory of craft has also been applied to the work of Schön on reflective practice (Kelly, 2011). Recent attempts to conceptualise how teachers in higher education 'learn to teach' have adopted the language of craft yet missed the theoretical contribution the writings of Sennett have on this discussion (Guzman, 2009). The work of Sennett on craft has, however, been little applied to current debates within ITE. Philpott (2015) briefly cites Sennett to recognise that alternative views of craft exist, while still nonetheless reducing craft to apprenticeship and observational models. In reconsidering craft, while the GTC Scotland (from a schools context) suggests the use of Sennett might be productive, no substantial research has moved attempts to apply this theoretical framework forward. The GTC Scotland note there is the tendency '...in public debates around teaching and education research has been the opposition between practical "common-sense" and "arcane" academic knowledge' (2014: 4). But this is a limited, simple and essentialist conceptualisation of craft: 'The notion of craft arising from this was neither Sennett's (2009) "craftsmanship", nor phenomenologists' "craft of thinking"' (GTC Scotland, 2014: 5). In what follows in the rest of this chapter I shall now turn to Sennett's theory of craft.

3.5.2 *The Craftsman*

In thinking about work and identity in contemporary capitalism, Sennett's (2008) response to the 'post-modern condition' (Lyotard, 1979) is posed as a question – 'where has the craftsman [sic] gone?' While this is a useful question, and Sennett's position makes clear the links between health care professionals and craft practice in the UK, it fails to consider the same argument as applied to the lives and identities of teachers. Sennett describes the sense of 'craft' as a '...skill of making things well' (2008: 8) and '... the desire to do a job well for its own sake' (2008: 9). In this view, '...the craftsman represents the special human condition of being engaged' (Sennett, 2008: 20) and as such is a lifelong commitment – a 'vocation' (borrowing from Weber, 2009, original 1918). The modern meaning of the term as something antiquated and often involving simple forms of labour is rejected. Sennett explores links between bodily practices and abstract thinking. In doing so, he presents the doctor, the scientist, the musician, the plumber and builder as 'craft' practitioners. In this thesis, I ask, where does this leave the teacher?

Sennett argues for the appreciation of the means through which making can be an act of self-reflexive being and an ethical basis for pleasure, reflexivity and satisfaction. Craftwork is therefore identity work: '...focused on achieving quality, on doing good work, which is the craftsman's primordial mark of identity' (Sennett, 2008: 25). This theorization offers an explanation of professional practice rooted in creativity, authority, and evidence. As Sennett notes,

'...history has drawn fault lines dividing practice and theory, technique and expression, craftsman and artist, maker and user; modern society suffers from this historical inheritance' (2008: ii).

As such this theorisation offers a model for an ethical orientation to work where quality is not reduced to performance 'standards' or to apprentice replication but instead is a potential basis for community, growth and pleasure. In my reading

of Sennett, this craft based theory of identity has three elements: it explores the relationship between skill and professionalism; it offers an explanation of the role of reflection in craft learning; and finally, it explores the nature of knowledge and experience within craft practice. I shall now explore these three elements in Sennett's writing.

3.5.3 Skill and professionalism

In taking the ideas of tacit knowledge from Polanyi (1958), Sennett explores the potential for an understanding of craft as a basis for professional identity:

'...[In the] higher stages of skill, there is a constant interplay between tacit knowledge and self-conscious awareness, the tacit knowledge serving as an anchor, the explicit awareness serving as critique and corrective. Craft quality emerges from this higher stage, in judgments made on tacit habits and suppositions' (2008: 50).

However, this is not to say that experience in professional practice is all. Skilful practice is seen as the interplay between experience and intellectual endeavour. To return to the similarities between Sennett and Polanyi once more, Polanyi writes of knowledge as '...an active comprehension of the things known, an action that requires skill. Skilful knowing and doing' (1958: vii). In this it is possible to see the teacher-as-craftsperson as skilful manipulator of the head and the hand: doing and knowing are active and the craftsperson is the *autor* of this skilful knowledge. The craftsperson's work is both physical and intellectual – using tools that are both embodied practices and also intellectual processes. These help the '...shaping of a skilful achievement, whether practical or theoretical' (Polanyi, 1958: vii). Polanyi refers to the intellectual/mental resources-at-hand in actively constructing knowledge as 'clues or tools'. The teacher as craftsperson/*autor*/ *bricoleur* (Levi-Strauss, 1966) uses both embodied and intellectual clues and tools in this model of craft from Sennett.

3.5.4 Reflection and learning

Sennett offers a view of professionals using tools and developing expertise while taking pleasure in a 'job well done'. This professional learning is itself framed by institutional contexts: '(t)he conflict between getting something right and getting it done has today an institutional setting' (Sennett, 2008: 46). Kelly (2011) notes the influence and legacy of both Schön (1983) and Dewey (1922) in the ideas of Sennett, since,

'...in craft expertise there is an intimate connection between doing and thinking, the physical and mental, and the 'how' and 'why' of activity, which evolves through the circularity of repetition and practice into habit...' (Kelly, 2011: 565).

In this view, Sennett's notion of craft is reflective, moral and habitual. It also offers a means through which we can think about what we do and who we are and the professional learning and identity formation processes involved. As Sennett says, '...in learning a skill, we develop a complicated repertoire of procedures' (2008: 50) and, '...in the higher stages of skill, there is a constant interplay between tacit knowledge and self-conscious awareness, the tacit knowledge serving as an anchor, the explicit awareness serving as critique and corrective' (2008: 50). In this view there are fundamental links between learning, reflection and identity. There is a role here for teacher educators teaching on ITE programmes: to help teachers to know how to elicit otherwise tacit knowledge. As Philpott puts it,

'...if we do not recognise the importance of the craft knowledge of performance, there is a risk that we leave this integration to chance' (2015:67).

This has implications for the curriculum of ITE and the pedagogy of teacher educators. If the role of ITE is to 'insist upon identity' (Danielewicz, 2001) then the integration of the practicum with explicit and formalised codified knowledge

is essential for the craft practices of teachers and of teacher educators. This locates craft as a highly professional orientation and one explicitly informed by theory and research, not the absence of it. Teaching is a process of identity formation and craft practice can be the vehicle for it.

3.5.5 Knowledge, experience and institutional context

In providing the example of Western medical doctors, Sennett explores how culture and capitalism 'stand in the way' of engagement in the workplace through craft. In this example workplace reform and the growth of performativity means that '...craft skills ...are being frustrated by the push for institutional standards' (2008: 46). This clinician-professional model is a strong feature within the writing of Sennett. For example, different paradigms of professionalism and of what constitutes professional knowledge,

'...conflict institutionally, as in medical care, when reformers' desire to get things right according to an absolute standard of quality cannot be reconciled with standards of quality based on embedded practice. The philosopher finds in this conflict the diverging claims of tacit and explicit knowledge; the craftsman at work is pulled in contrary directions' (Sennett, 2008: 52).

My reading of Sennett places his notion of craft at the intersection between tacit and explicit knowledge: there is knowing and skilful manipulation of knowledge in practice. Here, 'craft' does not have the derogatory connotation associated with some of the literature (see, for example, Scheffler 1960), but rather it is deeply interwoven into human nature itself as the desire to do a job with skill and pride. There are links in this to the notion that teaching is a moral and ethical enterprise (Campbell, 2003). From the craft perspective, knowing how to act, how to solve-problems, make decisions, and in so doing produce 'good work' is a moral basis for an identity that can potentially resist performativity cultures. This also places 'craft work' as an ethical practice that leads to identity work. This notion of 'moral craft' has been used previously by some earlier writers in the ITE field, most notably Tom (1980) who sees the ethics of practice

as essential for not just teachers but also for teacher educators. This would be an essential feature of 'professionalism' and not the deprofessionalism that some critiques of craft claim it is (Jarvis, 2005). Sennett demonstrates the effects that institutional contexts can have on practice and identity when he recognises that,

'...(T)he desire to do something well is a personal litmus test; inadequate personal performance hurts in a different way than inequalities of inherited social position or the externals of wealth: it is about you' (2008: 97).

3.6 Redefining craft

The Sennettian view of craft renders craft identity practices as 'positional', 'relational' and potential problematic in capitalist relations. Yet nonetheless Sennett's examples (especially of the UK National Health Service (NHS)) suggests that craft could be both problematic on the one hand, yet a source for agency and resistance on the other, context depending. It is a potential ethical orientation to work and practice. I also recognise from the above discussion that the existence of craft identities is complex when buttressed against the neo-liberal context of the lifelong learning workplace. Perhaps being a craftsperson is itself a form of (professional) social capital (Bourdieu 1977; 1979; 1983) – it is (or could be) a prized form of knowledge and one that is transmitted through collaborative and cooperative work. In this view, craft is not limited to experience and apprenticeship but has a more fully theorized nature.

Borrowing from the work of Sennett I define craft for the purposes of this research in the following way:

An ethical orientation to practice and identity wherein teachers as reflective agents use theory, tacit understanding and espoused theory to develop successful practice, the qualities of which have value for the practitioner and are a source of sustainable personal and professional pleasure.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented a wide range of literature on models of teacher craft practice and identity. This literature ranges across schools and the lifelong learning sectors and also across English and European contexts. In offering a critical review of the literature in the field and also the use of the term 'craft' within neo-liberalism, two models can be identified. The first, a contemporary use of the term, sees craft practice in a technical sense. This is the basis of the neo-liberal use of the term and has led to a highly critical teacher education 'response'. The second model, drawn from earlier literature, is a much more sympathetic model of craft and is a wider definition, not seeing craft as apprenticeship and neither seeing craft as the opposite of theory. The work of Sennett, located in a critical reading of his work informed by the previous work of C Wright Mills, Schön and Polanyi, positions craft as an ethical orientation to work largely in decline and yet still present amongst many professions in advanced capitalist workplaces. This view of craft draws on sociological writings that predate current neo-liberal usage. This approach will form the basis of my theorising in this thesis.

In discussing craft and how practice and identity are intertwined, Hagger and McIntyre (2006) pose a useful epistemology question: how can researchers (and teacher educators) enable teachers to talk about what they do and who they are becoming, so that it is possible to see the connections (the commonalities) between the two? In my research my theoretical frame will use the theorising of craft as outlined above while the epistemological frame adopted is one of digital ethnography - the reconceiving of the ethnographic field as an online place/space. In the next chapter, *Chapter 4, Methodology and Methods*, this approach is developed further.

Chapter 4 Methodology and Method

4.1 Introduction

This research is a small-scale, qualitative study rooted within an interpretive paradigm. The research is interpretative in nature since it seeks to explore issues of human and social subjectivity – the reflexivity of novice teachers and the ways they make sense of their emerging identity practices through group communication. It is ethnographic as it seeks to develop a ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) of these practices of novice teachers. Having said this, as this chapter will develop further, the solutions I develop and the methods I adopt are not traditional, but involve the use of the incorporation of online tools into the qualitative research cannon. This inquiry is located, specifically, within the emerging international epistemological tradition of ‘digital ethnography’ (Markham, 1998; Hine, 2000; Murthy, 2008; Kozinets, 2010). My research contributes to this field by demonstrating the usefulness and appropriateness of qualitative data drawn from online blogging practices to explore the nature of teacher identity and new teacher practice in the lifelong learning sector in England. In this research, I do not propose to ‘study the Internet’ (Markham and Baym, 2009) but rather, to use the Internet (and more precisely) social media (blogging) as a means to study novice teachers’ reflections on their practices. This research is not an ethnography of the Internet, but an ethnography of novice teachers using the Internet as a means to generate reflexivity. The research demonstrates that using digital methods and the creation of an online community is an effective epistemological tool to support teacher growth through collaborative, reflective, ethical and participatory research practices defined within the thesis as an ‘epistemology of doing’ (Rybas and Gajjala, 2007).

4.2 Research design

Before exploring the philosophical and epistemological 'location' for the research, I will first explain the research design and in doing so unpack the terms 'blog' and 'blogging' below.

The ethnographic data collection for this inquiry drew upon two different and consecutive academic years' worth of 'blogging'. Prior to this data collection, for three months, a pilot was developed with a different earlier cohort who were also teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England moving from 'trainee' to 'novice' and first-time employed practices. The first blogging with one cohort lasted a whole academic year and the second cohort (with a new 'empty' blog, effectively repeating the method and starting afresh with a new cohort) lasted half an academic year.

4.2.1 Blogs and Blogging: Definitions

Blogs are a smaller sub-set of the wider category of social media, and as a social (digital) phenomenon have existed for over a decade (boyd and Ellison, 2007; Park, Heo and Lee, 2011). For this research, blogs are both the medium through which data is collated but are also a (revised) field akin to an ethnographic field. 'Blog' is a truncation of two terms: 'web' and 'log'. '(We)blogs' are online spaces where text (or other stimulus) is 'posted' (saved online) and they are usually presented in a reverse chronology. While usually being the domain of a single author (Hookway, 2008) the use of blogging here is communal – they are the site of multiple authors, voices and interaction (between myself and the sample of novice teachers). (*Appendix D* illustrates some screen shots from the blogging platform used in this research.) Following Baker's (2013) comments about other social media (in this case Facebook) used for digital ethnography, blogging here is 'tool, data and context' at the same time.

Blogs are born out of the development and rise of Web2.0 tools (Churchill, 2009). Web2.0 refers to the use of online digital environments, platforms and tools that come as a 'second wave' after initial developments of the Internet. Web2.0 are not produced through the consumption of online media made by others, but by self-authoring of online content by those who use it. The self-documenting of 'real life' through digital processes and the classification and organization of this content are referred to as *folksonomies*. All social media are therefore Web2.0 phenomena. 'Cybercultures' (Benedikt, 1991; Escobar, 1994; Bell, 2001) present from Web2.0 are characterized by an on-going adaptation and are frequently being (re)drawn by individuals for whom their cultural significance are yet to be fully realized. Cybercultures are attempts at '...practicing everyday life' but mediated through online worlds' (Rybas and Gajjala, 2007).

4.2.2 Blogging: processes

After appropriate ethical approval (see the discussion later in this chapter) and through a period of 18 months, I adopted the role of an ethnographic researcher – 'meeting' participants and interacting with them; exploring how they made-sense of their new work practices as novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector. I explore the definitions and constructions of this ethnography later in this chapter. This 18-month period comprised two samples, the first for a whole academic year and the second for the first term of the following academic year. In this research two separate secure blogs (using the same platform and the same tools/features) were set-up for these two different cohorts over two different academic years. While the architecture of the blog remained the same, I effectively 'started again' with the second cohort, giving myself two opportunities to undertake the method. Each cohort was drawn from successfully awarded students from the PGCE PCET I taught in my teacher education role. The design of the research, following a pilot, was an ethnography 'mediated' through online tools. The 'meeting' and participation took place asynchronously [not in real time] and took the form of blog posts on

a secure site that only the participants and I had access to. In this way, the online site becomes a 'field' and eventually a community (Komito, 1998), and the interaction, questioning and reflections represent the researcher-participant and participant-participant interaction characteristic of an ethnography (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) albeit in this case one mediated by space, time, place and digital tools. In this way, I support the contention that blogs are '...a valid addition to the qualitative researcher's toolkit' (Hookway, 2008: 93).

While being an 'empty shell' in its first instance, I added the participants once they confirmed participation and had signed the appropriate disclosures (see *Appendix A* and *B*) and then ensured that the first time they logged on I had produced a welcome message explaining the blog, the nature of the research and the way in which I imagined the activities around posting would take place (see *Appendix E*). This opening post was drawn from the literature I had already written and disseminated to the novice teachers when informing them about the research in the first place (see *Appendix B*). In this way, this use of blogging enables new teachers to share reflections, stories and in doing so, create cultural texts and *folksonomies* [lay-actor acts of meaningful classification] which support their understandings of the *lebenswelt* [meaningful life-worlds (Husserl, 1970)] they inhabit when off-line, in employment practices. They join together in the flickering pages of the blog to create meaning, to 'do' textual work and in so doing, do 'identity work', supported by the reflective and communal experience. Shared lived experience is there to be both worked-up and worked-on. The digital ethnographic space allows these actors to communicate over traditional boundaries of time and space.

Some commentators have noted how the structure of the online communication system itself shapes and directs the nature of the communication that develops (Kollock and Smith, 1999; Hookway, 2008). In this research the novice teachers engage in acts of the self, while posting, commenting and interacting. I make a distinction between types of places/spaces online since the Web2.0 spaces in this research are 'unnaturalistic virtual spaces' rather than 'natural virtual

spaces' since they are created purely for the purposes of this research. I also make a distinction between social practices of the first-order and those of the second-order. The blogging represents a second-order field, where novice teachers reflect communally on the practices of the first-order – their own teaching contexts in the lifelong learning sector. The methodological challenge is to reconcile the stories in this second-order ethnographic field against the off-line world of social practices the participants inhabit. As Atkinson notes, '...the storytellers are the first interpreters of the stories told. It is through the personal construction of reality, and the story told about it that we as researchers, learn what we want to from our subjects' (1998: 5). I render as 'strange' these stories (Toren, 2008) but also recognise my own role in their co-construction (Riessman, 2011). In these practices, the participants can 'set the agenda' of the conversations to be had through offering 'discussion threads' for others to join. The more they posted and asked questions of each other, then the less I needed to set themes, although there is then an increased frequency in the questions I ask. In adopting blogging in this way, I explore how the process can be added to the qualitative researcher's tool-kit and to the cannon of established qualitative online methods. In making the case for the adoption of blogs within virtual methods, Hookway identifies the clear benefits of this form of hypermedia: text can be 'instant'; blogs are usually low-cost; they offer an '...instantaneous technique for collecting substantial amounts of data' (2008: 92); the immediacy of the text created – without the use of other tools such as recorders – allows for 'naturalistic text' to be constructed; and, they allow for communication over previously hard to reach space and time boundaries. Drawing from the experience of this research, I add a further advantage – one that is key for the digital ethnographer: blogs allow multiple authors to easily share and construct rich cultural textual practices. I will demonstrate in this thesis how in following an interpretative paradigm, blogging provides a rich research opportunity. To do this, I shall now explore the epistemological location of the research and the ways in which 'ethnography' is conceived herein.

4.3 Epistemological location

Before locating this thesis within a broad tradition of ethnographic research, I will firstly explore the choice to undertake a qualitative inquiry in the first instance. Noting the relatively unproductive and often simplistic dualism between positivist and interpretive paradigms (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009), I recognize the ‘pragmatic’ approach of Bryman (1988) and later Reichardt and Rallis (1994): that the values of quantitative and qualitative research and researchers are at many points compatible rather than incompatible. Nonetheless, I do recognise that presenting research traditions as ‘positivist’ or ‘interpretive’ (or ‘realist’) is helpful (albeit contested) as a heuristic device to ‘locate’ the research and to enable readers to understand the aims of an inquiry. In order to locate this research, I reject quantitative positivistic research since it does not enable the degree of reflexivity, participation and researcher involvement that I am seeking. The positivist project was originally a search for a ‘common methodological denominator’ – that the social sciences can and should follow the same methodological systematic procedures as the natural sciences (Durkheim, 1964). As Durkheim proposed, social researchers can adopt the ‘...same state of mind as the physicist, chemist or physiologist when he probes into a still unexplored region of the scientific domain’ (1964: xiv). However, this is not the route I have selected for this study, for reasons I now outline.

4.3.1 Interpretivism

The interpretivist challenge to positivism and also to empiricism *per se*, is to refute that ‘facts speak for themselves’ (May, 1993). Instead, social phenomena are seen to be ‘made real’ by social actors attributing cultural meaning. The subjectivity of these processes are lost to a research tradition concerned only with the measurement of objectivity ‘out-side’ of human emotions, psychology and social meaning. While avoiding the ‘paradigm wars’ of the past (Robson, 2002), I recognise that the topic under investigation –the identity formation of teachers - is highly reflective and reflexive. Therefore, adopting a methodological stance that enables participants to articulate these issues is

highly appropriate. This reflects Reichardt and Rallis' (1994) 'pragmatic' approach to methodology and to epistemological orientation: that methodological choices and practices are the outcome of a 'best fit' with the object/topic of inquiry. Following Sayer (1992) I concur that the production of all knowledge is a 'social activity' and as such knowledge production has subjectivity about it that traditionally positivism fails to neither recognise nor celebrate. Bhaskar (1975; 1989) notes that science itself is a social activity and the product of human intellectual work, labour and agency. For these reasons I adopt both a qualitative and an ethnographic approach – I am interested in the role values play in shaping inquiry and the ways in which 'facts' become constructed through data. 'Truth' is what comes out of research that must be structured, open and systematic so that readers make sense of it themselves. While 'truth' and 'facts' are products of inquiry, and not separate from them, I do not, though, regard this as a completely relativistic approach however, but a position wherein I recognise the work of Critical Realism (Layder, 1993; 1998; Sayer, 1992; 2000) and also acknowledge the contributions made by Giddens' 'new rules' of method (1976) and Archer's realist-morphogenetic approach (1995; 2000; 2003). In this regard, while data constructs truth and facts, the researcher is obliged to undertake research in an open and systematic fashion. Following Seale (1999), what matters to me in the 'quality' of my research is that my research practices are both critical and reflective. Rather than following systematic 'positivist' notions of research based upon a universal set of processes and stages, this thesis develops an approach which is true to Seale's '*fallibilistic*' recommendations whereby one develops '...a much more active and labour-intensive approach towards genuinely self-critical research, so that something of originality and value is created' (1999: 6). The research demonstrates how blogging creates rich data and the opportunities this method provides the educational ethnographer since digital methods provide an ease with which to interact, communicate and follow individuals who are otherwise displaced and not bounded, offering a point 'of betweenness' in space/time (Bhabha, 1994).

4.3.2 *Developing an ethnographic inquiry*

To explore ethnography I locate this research as aligned with the ideas of Geertz (1973) who borrows from Ryle (1949) the notion of a '*thick description*' being a defining feature of the ethnographic enterprise. As Ponterotto (2006) notes, citing Denzin (1989), 'thick description' for Ryle, involved the allocation by the ethnographer of intentionality to behaviour by social actors themselves: '...'thick' description involves understanding and absorbing the context of the situation or behavior. It also involves ascribing present and future intentionality to the behavior' (2006: 539). Denzin suggests that,

'Thick description evokes emotionality and self-feelings. It inserts history into experience. It establishes the significance of an experience, or sequence of events, for the person or persons in question. In thick description, the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of interacting individuals are heard' (1989: 83).

In developing this 'significance' of events for those who live them, and drawing upon the ideas of Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), ethnography emphasizes how people see their situations, make sense of their experience and see themselves. As Geertz notes, ethnography is a search for understanding rooted in the voices of those involved in social practices, and as such it is '...an interpretive one in search of meaning' (1973: 5). This is in essence the traditional ethnographic project and in adopting online/Internet tools I nonetheless believe I do not stray in this inquiry too far from it. I seek to understand the meaning and significance placed upon events by those who live them. However, the notion of what ethnography is and how it takes place is contested. Ethnography as a practice of inquiry has 'fuzzy semantic boundaries' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 1) which means that '...the label [ethnographic] is not used in an entirely standard fashion; its meaning can vary' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 1). While the contemporary use of ethnography as a methodology is contested, (re)reading Geertz positions ethnography as always having been a potentially diverse practice:

‘...doing ethnography is establishing rapport, selecting informants, transcribing texts, taking genealogies, mapping fields, keeping a diary, and so on. But it is not these things, techniques and received procedures, that define the enterprise. What defines it is the kind of intellectual effort it is’ (1973: 5).

Within this ‘intellectual effort’, Geertz takes ‘thick description’ and in doing so notes that when asking people to speak about their lives, their actions and behaviour, we can see ‘how extraordinarily ‘thick’ it is’ (1973: 9). In other words, how deeply located and rooted with meaning and subjective cultural understanding action is. This is both a challenge and opportunity for the ethnographer: on the one hand ‘meaning’ is often masked and obscured by the ‘thickness’ of context and only really presented by people so immersed in culture that it becomes ‘background information’. On the other, this is exactly where ‘reality’ is located – and is the object of social research: ‘...what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people’s constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to’ (Geertz, 1973: 9). This claim of ethnography – to uncover the meanings of the participants involved in making-sense of their social relations and practices – aligned well to my aim to explore novice teachers’ reflections upon first employment practices. Albeit a traditional ethnographic concern - the development of the stories of the participants – my method and approach to this was untraditional: the use of blogging to cover distances of space and time. This then, locates the thesis within the tradition increasingly referred to as a ‘digital ethnography’ (Hine, 2000). I will define and explore this in the section below.

4.3.3 Digital ethnography

In (re)locating ethnographic inquiry to include both cybercultures and virtual platforms (Hine, 2000) both as an object of inquiry and a means through which data can be captured, it ‘...is not a matter of methods’ (Geertz, 1973: 5) but a case of understanding ethnography as a sensibility and not a narrowly drawn cannon of methods and practices. As Beaulieu (2007) notes, digital

ethnographic epistemologies frame the Internet ‘...as both a new setting and a new technology for doing ethnography’ (2007). The work of Eichhorn (2001) already challenges the view that ‘online’ ethnography would also need to engage with participants ‘off-line’ in face-to-face ways to ‘count’ as ethnography. Using Orgad (2005; 2009) it is possible to refute easy and simplistic distinctions between ‘online’ and ‘offline’ as offering ‘less truthful’ and ‘more truthful’ or even ‘less real’ and ‘more real’ experiences for the researcher and for the location of research. International discussion of digital ethnography positions ‘...anxieties about whether the Internet can be a field at all’ (Beaulieu, 2007: 142) and in doing so, raises questions regarding the on-going need to refine and reposition theoretical and methodological ethnographic paradigms to take into account Cybercultures (Guimarães, 2005) and the challenges they raise for the self (Bell, 2001) and the production of cultural text (Rybas and Gajjala, 2007). In other words, ‘...how is ethnography being challenged and reinvented in its encounter with these new objects, and with the internet in particular?’ (Beaulieu, 2007: 142). Questions have been posed as to the meaningfulness of the ethnographic project in the light of mediated (virtual) social practices: does this pose a ‘crisis’ or ‘opportunity’ for the ethnographer? For some, notions of community – so vital to previous conceptualizations of ethnographic work – do not have a meaningful replication in the virtual (Calhoun, 1991).

In this case of this research, in adopting the researcher role, I am deeply involved in the creation of the textual practices which sit at the heart of the communal interaction: I set up the ‘empty shell’ blog, the online space, into which action and interaction between the participants and myself takes place. I therefore occupy multiple positions within both the research, the relationship to the participants and to the creation of the data. As an ethnographer acting within a field, I have a ‘presence’ (albeit asynchronous, disembodied and virtual in this case). These links between data generation and researcher presence are the same as in other ethnographic practice. I do recognize, though, the second-order nature of these textual practices. In the online practice, the text generated by the participants refers to another, offline world in the ‘actual’ – the

employment locations the novice teachers have entered for their first-time employment social practices. Hermeneutically, this data drawn from the action of blogging is both a social practice in its own right and refers to another first-order site of social practices and multiple relations. But as Geertz suggests, ethnography itself and data construction in particular are social practices. These are practices in the second-order of practices in the first-order, since there is,

‘...a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render. And this is true at the most down-to-earth, jungle field work levels of his activity: interviewing informants, observing rituals, eliciting kin terms, tracing property lines, censuring households . . . writing his journal. Doing ethnography is like trying to read (in the sense of "construct a reading of") a manuscript-foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behavior’ (Geertz, 1973: 10).

Following Geertz as outlined above, ‘thick description’ can still be generated and ethnography can still be developed if online. This is a ‘relocation’ of ethnography to the online world and seeing such an online presence as a field in its own right. And yet, if ethnography is not, as Geertz positions it, ‘the received procedures’ but rather the ‘kind of intellectual effort it is’ then this is not a dramatic relocation and redefining but rather an act of exploring and stretching along the boundaries of the traditional ethnographic project. To do this, I adopt blogging as a social practice and reframe it as a research practice and a communal practice.

4.4 Blogging as a research method

As demonstrated in the sections above, a number of international commentators have explored the role of digital methods in revising the ethnographic project. This is part of a more general trend to adopt and adapt

computer-mediated-communication and online tools for social research. Time for, as James and Busher put it, ‘...colonising the social space in online qualitative research’ (2009: 1), while recognising that there is ‘...a relatively small field of literature on online qualitative research in education’ (2009: 1). In other fields such methods are also beginning to be used amongst researchers (Mann and Stewart, 2000; Chen *et al*, 2004). More recently blogging is beginning to be adopted for a wide range of purposes (Hookway, 2008; Park, Heo and Lee, 2011). They are being used within research practices to develop critical reflection within communities of practice (Yang, 2009); to capture data on post-graduate learners’ learning (Churchill, 2009); for researching into informal adult learning (Park, Heo and Lee, 2011); and, for researching language teaching practices (Hasim, De Luca and Bell, 2011). This has taken some time, relatively speaking, for the social practice of blogging to enter research practices.

4.4.1 Pilot research – choosing blogging

In the pilot a *wiki* forum was originally developed (see *Appendix C* for sample data from this pilot study), before the choice of blogging was established. A *wiki* refers to the ability for users who have no familiarity with ‘code’ to put content online. They are ‘...open to contributions or modifications of its content’ (Kozinets, 2010: 86). *Wikis* tend to be textual and communal in the sense that participants can respond to the text each other has ‘posted’. *Wiki* refers to the coding that enables group editing possible. This technique is often found within Forums (also known as ‘bulletin boards’). Forums are ‘...text based exchanges often organized around shared orientations or interests’ (Kozinets, 2010: 190). Forums represent an online ‘interest group’ (Mann and Stewart, 2000; O’Connor and Madge, 2000; 2001). Researchers may join existing groups or they may create their own for the purposes of their own research (Mann and Stewart, 2000).

The intention was to see how to encourage novice teachers to collaborate online and a forum seemed at first a useful choice: The *wiki* forum allowed for participants to set topics of conversation, called ‘threads’, (see *Appendix J* for examples of ‘threads’ from the blogging) and to make posts and replies. This worked in much the same way as the blogging chosen as the final method/tool. The difference was that it was quickly found that while the *wiki* certainly allowed for asynchronous interaction and participants appeared able to use the tool and were open in the posts they made, the structure of the *wiki* did not seem to lend itself to encouraging longer-posts. Other commentators have noted how the nature and structure of the computer-mediated-communication tools profoundly affect the nature of text and interaction (Walther, 1996; 2002; Joinson, 2005). I made the decision that I wished the method to encourage participation (including mine) rather than what is referred to in online spaces as ‘lurking’ (Orgad, 2005). As such, *wikis* did not lend themselves to ‘thick description’ and nor were posts particularly reflective. Rather, posts made and replies offered were quick and short adopting a ‘text-message’ style. I made the choice to continue with an online method that encouraged participation (multi-participant, seeing each others points, responding and replying) but that would still develop the sort of reflective writing practices that developed more ‘wordy’ and more in-depth descriptions from the participants’ point of view. Given its similarity to a diary, and to detailed writing practices (Toms and Duff, 2002), I eventually moved the research tool from *wiki* forums to blogging instead. Unusually for blogs (Hookway, 2008) I used blogs with multiple-authors and as a communal experience. In this sense, I used blogs as if they are forums – building into the practice a commitment to interaction. This use of the blogging tool will now be explored further in the sections below.

4.4.2 Choice of the Blogger platform

Bakardjieva (2009) suggests that blogs, despite being online, have more in common with a traditional use of the diary: ‘...it does not constitute an essentially new type of “online data” different from the paper (offline?) version’ (59). However, my use of blogging is to extend the ‘diary-online’ features and to

develop textual practices that are communal and interactive. Blogs in general – and the ‘Blogger platform’ used here in particular – have a number of useful features or ‘tools’ used in the generation and production of online content. In developing any tool for data collection, consideration needs to be given to how the functionality and features of the tool work. For example, if developing an online questionnaire due attention is given to how the questions appear, the use of ‘drop-down’ menus and the general aesthetics of the tool as well as how user-friendly it is.

For the adoption of blogs as a qualitative method, consideration must also be given to the features of the online tool. With blogs in general, participants can make ‘posts’ – in other words, can produce fresh online text (akin to a new diary entry) (see *Appendices D, F and G*);¹ they can ‘reply’ to others and interact, keeping conversations going (see *Appendices J, K and L*).² These replies are not time-limited, so ideas can always be revisited, with the full post available for further consideration; it is also possible for those who make posts to delete them and also to update (‘edit’) them over time. These tools ensure that posts are easy to make, easy to seen by others and enable the ability to respond and reply over time.

See *Table 4.1* for a description of these features of the blogging tool.

¹ *Appendix D* demonstrates some screenshots from the blog – illustrating the diary-quality of the writing and the reflective writing produced. In *Appendix F* I demonstrate an example of a first post made by a participant, called within social media a ‘hello world’ post to denote a first-time introduction. *Appendix G* demonstrates an early post by one of the participants showing the possibility for others to ‘reply’ and interact.

² These three illustrations (*Appendices J, K and L*) all demonstrate in different ways the way in which topics and ideas for conversation can become ‘threads’ on the blog – where participants set the topic for conversation, give it a title and then others reply developing an online asynchronous conversation.

Table 4.1 Features of the Blogger tool

| Feature | Explanation of use |
|-----------------|--|
| Post | A 'post' is akin in this medium to a diary entry. A fresh 'page' or fresh point to be made. Blog posts are presented in reverse chronology, as if the online diary has automatically been opened at the most recent entry. See <i>Appendix F</i> and <i>G</i> for examples of posts. In this research participants were able to make posts themselves, setting the agenda for discussion. They would need as part of this process to 'name' the post or entry with a title of their choosing (see <i>Appendix J</i> for examples). |
| Reply (comment) | In reading the posts of others participants as well as myself as researcher are also able to make a comment, or 'reply'. These take the form of responses to the initial post or entry, stored on the blog directly under the original post still in its chronological location. The number of comments/replies a post receives is always indicated under the post itself (see <i>Appendix G</i> for examples). |
| Thread | The term 'thread' is used for issues, themes, posts that develop into longer traceable conversations over time. The term 'thread' usually applies to Web2.0 Forums (or <i>wikis</i>) where someone 'posts' a question and others answer directly underneath it. Each new topic or new question then becomes its own 'thread'. I adopt the term here to refer to posts and comments that continue conversation and interaction over time. |
| Edit post | Those who 'own' the post – the author who created it in the first place – can also edit the post easily. In some cases this can happen straight away, as the author considers their reflective text. Alternatively edits can occur at any point once the post is live to the community. |

| | |
|------------|---|
| Trash | To 'trash' a post is to permanently delete. Only one post was 'trashed' and it was reposted (in presumably a revised form) minutes after being originally posted. Due to the asynchronous nature of access to the blogging platform, the speed that posts can be made, and the different times that the participants choice to make posts this trashed post was promptly lost. On asking the participant why the original post was deleted in the first place, he (an English teacher) replied that he thought his language was not good enough and that he had revised how he expressed the point he was making. |
| Time stamp | All posts have a 'stamp' at the very bottom which lets all viewers of the blog see who posted, when, and then allow comments/replies and for the original author the opportunity to edit (see <i>Appendix F</i> and <i>H</i> for examples of posts and <i>Appendix D</i> for screen shots of the blog). |

Of the many available blogging tools (*WordPress, Tumblr, Posterous, Joomla*) at the time, the platform chosen for this research was *Blogger*, now owned by and incorporated into the Google suite of web applications and online tools. The choice of *Blogger* as the platform was intentionality three-fold:

Ease of use: Firstly, it is highly useable and not too complicated – its features allow for interaction and accommodate a considerable length in making 'posts' and yet it has a relatively intuitive quality to it as a tool; it is not too over complicated nor complex but does allow for complex interaction and 'replies' between participants. Blogs in general are seen to be able to enable users of 'low technical competence' (Thelwall and Wouters, 2005; Hookway, 2008). This is especially true of the chosen *Blogger* platform.

Familiarity: Secondly, given the above reasons, I have already used the *Blogger* platform with trainees as part of pre-programme and pre-enrolment teaching while they were students on my ITE programme. It is a tool they were therefore already familiar with. After the limited success of the pilot (see *Appendix C*) and recognition of the need for another tool, the use of blogs in general and *Blogger* in particular seemed appropriate.

Sustainability: Thirdly, as one of the original and well established blogging applications (and as an application owned by Google) the tool has a considerable online presence. As part of this, there is considerable safety in online and digital back-up. Over time, as the research developed, while I saved data into more established off-line programmes such as Word and Excel (with file and folder encryption and password protection to ensure safety), it was nonetheless vital that the platform was always accessible to the participants, did not suffer from down-time, and that the terms and conditions of the use of a free online tool were not likely to change.

In addition, beyond the intended benefits, there are also issues of *Device support (access)*: Something unconsidered at the time, but on hindsight is a real advantage to the asynchronous and ubiquitous nature of Web2.0 communication, is the extensive support for and access to the *Blogger* tool provided by tables, phones and other mobile devices through normal Internet connection and dedicated Apps (software applications which enable the Internet). The consequence of this is that participants were able to access and 'post' onto the blog while on the move and not constrained to a desktop computer.

One consequence of the adoption of online tools for research is that their use assumes that the researcher his/her self is already confident and competent

with the technology to the extent that they can see the advantages and opportunities (Beneito-Montagut, 2011; Baker, 2013). As ‘...not only is the Internet a place, it is also a tool and a way of being, and each of the aspects poses different methodological choices’ (Webster and da Silva, 2013: 123). Pragmatically, I think it is also significant to recognise that I develop this research using blogging already personally familiar with these tools from other aspects of my personal and professional life (through teaching) and can see the ways in which they enable the production of text and data.

4.4.3 Similarities to other online methods

The nature of the generation of qualitative text amongst those involved in the blogging has some similarities to the processes of knowledge construction found within other online research methods (James and Busher, 2009). As Hookway notes, it is important to see ‘...how traditional research methods might be transformed to the online context’ (2008: 92). Yet it is the case that while quantitative research practices have been more readily transferred to an online form this is not the case initially for qualitative practices (Hookway, 2008; Batinic *et al*, 2002; Hewson *et al*, 2003). In particular, the transference of paper surveys to an online presence is a practice that has had relatively widespread adoption (Solomon, 2001), perhaps even replacing ‘paper-and-pencil surveys’ (Lefever, Dal and Matthiasdottir, 2007). In some respects, the use of blogging as an asynchronous tool across multiple members of an online space can be also conceived as part e-diary, part e-focus group. This is due to the emphasis upon the development of written communal reflective accounts, descriptions and stories. In more traditional and off-line methods, the use of diaries and journals as a means to enable reflective practice is well documented within the field (Farr Darling, 2001; Moon, 2006; Monrouxe, 2009). There are already examples of social scientific research into teachers and students using diaries and journals as a means to capture data (see for example Alaszewski, 2005). Morrison and Galloway (1996) used diaries with supply teachers, asking them to document their experiences in and out of the classroom and Avis *et al* (2001) have used time-log diaries with FE practitioners to record work flow, as well as online communities of practice (Avis and Fisher, 2006). Jordan (1989) writes of

the fundamental role to be played by the articulation of ‘stories’ to help apprenticeship learning. In my research, through adopting blogs, it is possible to replicate in an online version this production of ‘stories’ and reflective practices, but with the benefit of doing so over distances of time and space and with multiple participants/authors/viewers. This is what makes my use of blogging ‘more’ than a diary online (Hookway, 2008; Bakardjieva, 2009). It is already documented how collaborative writing aids reflective practice, and my research practices replicate this (Storch, 2005) since ‘...blogs take the form of online diaries or what I call ‘self-narratives’” (Hookway, 2008: 93). Blogs also have a sense of the ‘highly personal’ which can be, for outsiders eyes’ ‘highly captivating’ (Serfarty, 2004), adding to the richness of the data produced. The interactive nature of blogs enabled the accessibility benefits of online journals to be combined with the ability to develop reflective and writing practices between participants (Rodzvilla, 2002; Godwin-Jones, 2003; 2008; Hookway, 2008).

4.5 Undertaking the fieldwork

This research takes place over three separate periods of ‘fieldwork’:

(1) The pilot study using *wiki* forums, before moving on to the adoption of the blogging platform lasted for a period of three months and included three participants. As with all periods of ‘fieldwork’ for this research, participation was asynchronous. In this pilot study ‘threads’³ were developed across the three months of online interaction.

(2) Once the decision was made to develop blogging as the online method the first period of fieldwork with the first cohort lasted a whole academic year. This first cohort comprised 5 participants. As with the pilot and also the year 2 fieldwork with a separate set of participants, the online interaction commenced

³ A list of some of the thread titles appears in *Appendix J* and sample screenshots of the blogging appear in *Appendix D*. See also *Appendix H* for an example of a post followed by researcher prompting and questioning and *Appendix I* for further examples of questions asked of participants while blogging.

in August – ready for the start of the new academic year in England, the year of the participants' first-time employment as a teacher. As with the pilot and also with the year 2 fieldwork the participants themselves worked across a variety of specialist subject areas and also across a diverse variety of lifelong learning settings, contexts and institutions.

(3) In the second and final fieldwork (which including the pilot is year three of data collection), there were a further 5 new participants. This fieldwork generated a range of posts between August and December of the same year but these posts were noticeably longer and more detailed than those from the first year cohort. In December (after the first 'term' of employment) the decision was made to end the data generated due to pressures of time on the cohort, partly a result of the depth of the very well considered and detailed posts they were making. *Table 5.3* in the next chapter explores the nature of this posting further.

4.5.1 Sampling

The sample for the research was drawn across two cohorts; two successive years of PCET ITE cohorts at the university I am a teacher educator at. This raises some ethical issues as well as issues of positionality as these students were all known to me, as was in most cases their actual classroom practice while on pre-service practicum.

This constitutes a process of sampling similar to the 'theoretical sampling' used in qualitative research (although it starts from an opportunistic sampling base) whereby meaningful characteristics of the participants need to ensure a reasonable orientation to the topic of study (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In this sampling method participants are deliberately included so that the central premise of the research can be undertaken. This is both a strength and weakness since this would therefore exclude opportunities for a more random provision, leading to data that might not be predicted. This use of theoretical sampling, to support the development of a specific theoretical concept, is associated with the development of grounded theory (and the

pioneering authors in this field) precisely due to the importance thereafter of systematic coding to ensure rigour and quality (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). While this thesis is not built on a grounded theory base, the idea that the sample can be constructed deliberately to test a theoretical idea that is then coded in a systematic and open way seemed a highly relevant choice.

Selecting a sample in this purposeful way, to ensure that aspects of the research can be adequately tested, means that a sense of theoretical argument needs to have already been established, or at least, ideas for theory need to be hinted at through the literature and through other aspects of research and theoretical practice. Again, this then means the research needs to be clear and open regarding ethical permissions and participant briefing (see *Appendices A and B*).

Data needs to be handled carefully to ensure analysis can accommodate the full range of the data regardless of original theoretical suppositions (Pawson, 1989; Charmaz, 2006). I assert that while numbers of the sample remain low, the theoretical and research claim under scrutiny is adequately explored, reconciled against the need to keep numbers low to ensure meaningful interaction with a small group who can support each other. I accept a 'pragmatic' approach to the use of qualitative inquiry that sees the creation of data from any sample size and sampling process as a social endeavour (Bryman, 1988; Sayer, 1992; Reichardt and Rallis; 1994). I have adopted a method that 'best fits' the research and likewise I have done the same with the sampling method and size.

4.5.2 Practicalities of the sampling

In all, the sample developed for the two sets of fieldwork and also the pilot is outlined in *Table 4.2* below.

Table 4.2 Outline of the sample

| | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Pilot study | Sample initially of 3 participants | 3 months duration | Use of <i>wiki</i> forums |
| Fieldwork year 1 | Sample of 5 participants | 9 months (an 'academic year') duration | Use of the Blogger platform |
| Fieldwork year 2 | Sample of 5 additional participants | 4 months (first 'term' of new employment) | Continued use of the Blogger platform |

In terms of gaining the specific sample from the relevant population (in this case trainee teachers about to become first-time employed/novice teachers), a number of processes took place within the purposeful and 'Theoretical Sampling':

- a. Using the materials demonstrated in *Appendix B*, trainee cohorts were briefed and introduced to the opportunities for participation;
- b. Briefings/ introductions were carried-out to the whole group, with no exceptions, at the end of taught sessions. Opportunities for questions about the research and its aims and processes were encouraged;
- c. Research participation was explained as offering a '*something for something*' basis – that it was believed that participation would offer a valuable opportunity for community, reflection and development;
- d. All trainees about to become novices were invited to express interest, however they needed to meet a number of criteria: Trainees were invited to take part ensuring that they were able to undertake the central data-gathering task (the use of the blogging platform) and as long as their

practice and employment met the requirements (being in the lifelong learning sector).

- e. No 'quantity' was placed on participation and no time-scale or frequency was offered – despite this being one of the questions often asked by the trainees themselves in the briefings. Rather than limit the participation to a pre-defined number of posts or replies and in doing so create artificial limits, I decided that I would be open with trainees that this was one aspect of participation that was to be 'worked at and worked on' together, and in this way communally constructed. In all the briefings I did try to make clear that what was needed was 'regular' use of the space and alongside this openness and tolerance towards others. I made it clear in these briefs that one aspect of participation was to engage with others and in doing so receive mutual support.

It was originally intended and assumed that this open invitation would then be 'narrowed down' to a manageable size (to ensure interactions were able to be maintained). Experience with using online methods in my teaching (which also included teaching the ITE programme the sample themselves were drawn from) suggested that limiting the size of the sample to a small number would best enable this kind of exploratory research and also ensure that participation could be fully managed, encouraged and supported. From an ethical viewpoint, and adopting the ideas of Mann and Stewart (2000), participation needed to be sensitively managed. To require open and reflective accounts to flourish which were rooted in participant's own understandings of their stories (essential for the 'thick description'), it was essential that interaction took place. Given this the scale of numbers seemed to have a likely effect upon how interaction would take place and be managed. Scale/size was assumed (and found) to be as significant a factor in shaping the nature of the data as would the issue previously raised by Walther (1996; 2002) and Joinson (2005) that Computer-Mediated-Communication's visual design and structure has significant consequences for the nature of interaction maintained.

In the end, in both years of the fieldwork, the numbers who eventually expressed interest were small. I always positioned the opportunity as open to

ideally 'around 5-7' participants (see briefings for potential participants in *Appendix B*). From an ethical viewpoint, and recognising that these were my students, I reflect here that if I had received a greater number, while positioning this as having 'value' for their development, I would most likely have accommodated larger numbers operating two separate blogging platforms at the same time. Of those who expressed interest, the sample 'narrowed themselves', in a self-selected way, after further briefings I provided. I tried to tread a careful line between on the one hand making the demands of participation clear and realistic, while on the other not pushing into (reluctant or unsure) participation for those who seemed less interested. I also withheld joining instructions and passwords until it was clear that those expressing interest were serious, and often this coincided with the use of the consent to participate forms (see *Appendix A*) as a device to 'formalise' the contractual elements of participation, with nonetheless due regard to their right to withdraw. The nature of this research also raised issues for how participation and early posting and interaction was to be managed, which are explored further in the section below and also at the start of the next chapter, *Chapter 5, Findings*.

4.6 Ethical issues

Ethical considerations do not solely protect participants but are also to ensure confidence over the outcomes of research (James and Busher, 2009). Hookway has suggested that, '...with the emergence of online tools like blogs for conducting research come new and challenging ethical dilemmas and controversies' (2008: 104). Within the debate over what is appropriate for online research and online interaction (Johns *et al*, 2004) there is concern over online research using social media since, '...(I)n hypermedia ethnography, ethical concerns are all the more likely to arise since data are made much more accessible to readers' (Dicks *et al*, 2006: 133). A similar point is made by Delorme *et al* (2001) who note that online communication often blur lines between private and public and this is an especially significant feature of ethical consideration for online research. To accommodate these positions, I treat for ethical purposes multi-participant blogging as I would face-to-face focus groups

and moderate interaction while also ensuring that participants understand the need for honesty, openness and privacy, while respecting each other's views. However the concerns of Hookway (2008) and other commentators refer to blogs that are open and available for public use. This research provides private and secure blogging opportunities – only made open and visible to those who participated in the research. This has implications for openness and honesty and also raises some ethical issues around community and moderation.

Lave and Wenger (1991) make a distinction between talking *about* a practice and talking *within* a practice. It is important for the methodology of this inquiry that participants are afforded the opportunity to reflect upon their classroom practice and in doing so make transparent the choices and decisions which underpin the growth of the professional craft knowledge located within the situated context of their first teaching role. Avis and Fisher suggest that on-line learning can construct a 'dialogic space for learning' (2006: 141), and that increased capacity of communications and learning technologies lead to new possibilities for professional learning and the ways in which new 'communities of practice' (Wenger, 1998) can be constructed. Holmes (2009) notes that while much Internet-based/online research has little risk for participants this is potentially not true for welfare within online environments that might be harmful if unmediated and confidentiality was compromised. With this in mind, and working within an interpretative paradigm seeking transformation in the action and practice of the participants, anonymity was not promised within the sample, but moderation did take place. If they were to be an online community they would need to 'know each other' and relate in both professional and reflective ways to the views and concerns shared. Both confidentiality and anonymity were, however, promised at the point that research findings and quotations are made available in research papers and presentations. Flicker *et al* (2004) identify three key issues in the ethics of online research: how participants are enrolled, how participants are protected from risk and how data is or is not public/private/protected. I give consideration to these issues in what follows below, in accordance with the (revised) Ethical Guidelines laid out by the British

Educational Research Association (2011) and the statement of ethical research practice on human subjects as made by the university:

Informed consent and the right to withdraw – participants have been made fully aware of the nature of the study through both a leaflet explaining the developmental and participatory nature of the inquiry and a comprehensive participation statement/agreement to sign making clear their right to withdraw at any time (see *Appendices A and B*). This leaflet also informed the first ‘welcome’ post made to all novice teachers as they entered the blog for the first-time after being securely invited by myself (see *Appendix E*).

Confidentiality – participants were made aware in pre-participation literature and at formal meetings at the university prior to participation that those taking part will know the identities of the rest of the sample. This choice was made for three reasons – both practical and also epistemological: Firstly, the sample (in each year’s cohort) were already known to each other since they come originally from the same cohort of trainees from my own teaching programmes. It would seem a ‘mask’ of truth to then shield identity from those participating since they would be interacting together (and also in off-line contexts too). Secondly, the sample were able to see each other’s posts (and were reading each others’ ‘stories’) and would most likely be able to recognise each other at this point nonetheless. Thirdly, within the ‘epistemology of doing’ paradigm established here, the approach adopted is one where communities are built and work together. I felt that some aspects of confidentiality and especially anonymity between the virtual community of bloggers would be a barrier to meaningful dialogue and reflective exchange.

Briefing and de-briefing – I found myself devoting lots of time and careful attention to ensuring that those who participated understood the nature of what I was attempting and that this was ‘research’ and the data would be used in an academic fashion. As Mann and Stewart suggest, ‘...until online methods are more mainstream, it is the individual researcher who must take responsibility for convincing others of the authenticity and credibility of the medium when, for

instance, seeking informed consent' (2000: 51). I certainly had to explain how and why this was research and how it might not fit their assumptions about research being 'questionnaires and interviews'.

Trust - As a qualitative inquiry and as ethnography, ethical considerations are themselves heavily bound-up with an epistemological focus upon trust and respect for those who take part. This research is a subjective construction of others' subjective constructions of lived experience. As an ethnographer I 'poke and probe' at meaning and claims made by those who take part, but keep in mind a trust for the truthfulness and reality of what they have to say – and at least what they think the truth is to say. Although this is an issue of the ontological ability for data to 'get at reality' it comes to affect ethical choices made, as this trust of those who take part must guide my actions as a researcher.

4.7 Developing an 'epistemology of doing'

I draw upon Rybas and Gajjala's (2007) term 'epistemology of doing' as part of the ethical way I conceive research participation. In doing so, I recognize the role that talk and communication can play in supporting 'relational agency' (Edwards, 2005; Edwards and Mackenzie, 2005; Edwards and Fowler, 2007). Rybas and Gajjala (2007) refer to 'epistemologies of doing' whereby ethnography and ethnographers engage in ontological and epistemological practices to chart and map how individuals and groups co-construct cultural texts. Such epistemologies find favour with action research orientated ethnographies and those adopting Critical Theory and aspects of a feminist epistemology since it offers participants a 'centre' in the research and allows them to explore their own ideas in a reflexive fashion. The phrase used with the participants themselves, to act as short-hand for the textual and social practices generated in participation, was involvement as a '*something for something approach*': they have an opportunity for further professional learning as they move into employment practices through participation.

The notion of research practices supporting teacher development and change is central to my adoption of a qualitative approach. In this way interpretive inquiry rather than more positivistic approaches provide a platform to explore with participants their own practices. This is a learning opportunity. For example, Fraser *et al* (2007) suggest that both notions of 'teacher learning' and notions of more formalised 'teacher development' are themselves part of a more important and wider process of 'teacher change'. It is this process of 'teacher change' that the research's communal and reflective qualities support. Richardson and Placier (2001) argue that teacher change incorporates a wide set of relational processes including: socialisation, learning, development, growth, improvement, and self-study. There is an epistemological aesthetic here that is also shared with claims made about action research and its participatory nature (Humphrey, 2007; Kemmis, 1997; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988; Zuber-Skerritt, 1996). In this research, participation changes those who take part. It helps establish online professional relationships of support and mutual regard, which in some cases have also been continued off-line.

For interaction to take place the sample needed to be able to easily access each other's posts and communicate to fulfil meaningfully the desire to establish a (virtual) community and to adopt a transformative and reflective research paradigm. This decision raises practical and ethical considerations. In terms of constructing an 'epistemology of doing' based around the blogging methodological tool this poses ethical considerations around managing a 'community': Participants upload their posts to the secure blogging webspace where they can read the post/replies of each other - generating support amongst the participants and offering membership of a virtual 'community of practice' with appropriate ethical permissions and full informed consent. This offers something of considerable value back to both the participants of the research, situating them as their own 'virtual community' (Lee, McLoughlin and Chan, 2008). For this community to become established (and one of my own 'construction') there is an obligation to e-moderate ensuring that truth and authenticity of the points and posts they made does not offend other members of the group. Mann and Stewart (2000) refer to this as an issue of establishing

appropriate '*netiquette*'. Following their suggestions for establishing '*netiquette*', I ensured that:

- a. I facilitated over all posts and moderated accordingly, and yet at the same time avoided 'heavy-handed facilitation' which itself could also be deemed as unethical practice and something which might then limit and call into question the authenticity of the data developed;
- b. I accepted (and encouraged the group to accept) typos and other mistakes as part of the textual practice of the language developed on the blog, As Mann and Stewart (2000) put it, part of the '*umming and ahhing*' of interactional language;
- c. I ensured that welcome messages and first-posts were always established and that participants introduced themselves to the group;
- d. I made 'case-by-case decisions' (Mann and Stewart, 2000) over whether editing was needed;
- e. Mann and Stewart (2000) also note that non-response and periods of prolonged absence/silence are also to be best managed. I tended to allow participants to manage their use of and time on the blog as they best saw fit, only occasionally sending updates and requests for activity at key moments.

These practices 'shape' the data and its construction. This is the same, though, as interacting with participants in a joint interview or a focus group given that, '...any involvement of the researcher automatically becomes part of the electronic script and therefore part of the dynamics of the session' (Mann and Stewart, 2000: 61). Although this comment refers to the use of 'chat' environments in real-time, drawing parallel to any real-time face-to-face method such as a focus group, it has a bearing upon asynchronous chat and interaction in blogging and as such I have found these rules useful when ethically navigating my way around the blogging fieldwork for the research.

4.8 A note on data

Having established the nature of the fieldwork for the generation of the data, I shall now critically consider the role of coding for the 'constructing' of the data. In its 'raw form' the data constructed via blogging practices is presented as text (Rybas and Gajjala, 2007). At each stage of the data-organisation processes developed, there are opportunities to 'map' and develop associations between the data and the literature (see *Appendix M*) through coding. The production of these conceptual maps is akin to the practices of memo making and memo-writing as described by both Charmaz (2006) and Layder (1998). This is recognised by both these authors as a central process in the generation of analytical explanations and the managing and handling of rich interpretative data. This also mirrors the process of the ethnographer with field notes and field journals. For Geertz (1973) the job of the ethnographer is to render accounts and descriptions of social /textual practice of lay-actors meaningful:

'If ethnography is thick description and ethnographers those who are doing the describing, then the determining question for any given example of it, whether a field journal squib or a Malinowski-sized monograph, is whether it sorts winks from twitches and real winks from mimicked ones' (1973: 16).

Partly, this is a process of taking into account the lay-actors' own constructions of their sense-making and partly it is a process of carefully sieving, selecting and accounting for patterns, ideas, meanings within these lay-actors' accounts by the researcher as a second-order construction. This poses a key problematic for qualitative research – namely how to separate out in 'thick description' the 'winks' from 'twitches' (in the words of Geertz, following Ryle, 1949); how to know (and be able to justify) that interpretations are 'grounded' in the reality of the lay-actor. This is not reportage, not a case of 'allowing description to speak for itself' but of applying theoretical and conceptual tools to the data at hand.

My 'research problem' is the construction of appropriate methodological tools to aid the exploration of issues of identity, given the subjectivity of the issue under investigation, and the asynchronous and disembodied nature of online communities and virtual cultural practices. The eventual adoption of the Sennettian 'craft' theoretical lens and my coding process for this inquiry has been heavily influenced by the 'adaptive theorizing' approach advocated by Layder (1998). In terms of building appropriate theoretical tools, following Layder (1998), mid range theorizing (to use the language of Merton, 1967) should be both 'grounded' in the data produced, but isn't exclusively the product of construction-after-the-fact in the image of 'grounded theory' held by Glaser and Strauss (1967; 1971). While drawn to some aspects of the 'grounded' approach as first developed by Glaser and Strauss, the research approach developed here finds sympathy with the work of Charmaz (2006). Rather than adopt a 'pure' approach where the data points in directions for theory building only after collection, debt is duly given to the description of data analysis offered by Charmaz who talks of the 'richness' to be gained within qualitative research of developing 'thick description' from where the data points; developing lens of scrutiny with each new viewing. Following Layder (1998) the researcher '*swims*' in the literature as much as 'swims in the data' afterwards. Charmaz herself places great emphasis upon memo writing as an active process of engagement with the story of the data and the meaning it generates and creates.

Within the realist project developed by Layder and others (Archer, 1995; Pawson, 1989) the role of theory and theorisation occupies a distinctive place that places realism (or, 'scientific realism') as distinctive from notions of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; 1971). As Layder notes,

'...(T)he fundamental basis of the adaptive approach rests on the twin employment of, and the subsequent interaction between, extant or 'prior' theoretical materials and emergent data from ongoing research' (1998: 166).

Layder positions this 'adaptive' approach as more 'solid' than Blumer's 'sensitizing concepts' (Blumer, 1954) and yet more flexible and theory-informed

than Grounded Theory. There is something of the analytical *bricoleur* (Levi-Strauss, 1966) involved here: moulding, shaping and doing 'intellectual work' on data. This also resembles C Wright Mills' (1959) description of scholarly activity as a 'craft'. This 'dual approach' of adaptive theorisation is seen to

'...ensure that extant or prior concepts and theory both shape and inform the analysis of data which emanates from on-going research at the very same time that the emergent data itself shapes and moulds the existing theoretical materials' (Layder, 1998: 166).

Adaptive theory is an act of synthesis, of finding systematic linkages between prior analytical materials and data – a claim mirrored by Charmaz (2006) who judges 'research success' as the generation of 'rich data'. While being epistemologically different, this has sympathy with Geertz's use of Ryle's notion of 'thick description'. This places the importance of coding as highly significant for the ethnographic enterprise. The process of conceptualisation takes the 'thickness' of the data generated in this research and develops an analytical and systematic set of procedures so that emergent themes can be drawn together. This is a process both of (re)organisation and production/generation since '...we can add new pieces to the research puzzle or conjure entire new puzzles – while we gather data' (Charmaz, 2006: 14). This positions data-organisation practices as a matter of rational and systematic stages: '...like a camera with many lenses, first you view a broad sweep of the landscape. Subsequently, you change your lens several times to bring scenes closer and closer into view' (Charmaz, 2006: 14). In making this claim, Charmaz writes of the stages and processes involved in understanding and crafting a considered and analytical response to data. In reading and coding, the processes involved, '...provide a path, expand your vistas, quicken your pace, and point out obstacles and opportunities along the way...At each phase of the research journey, your readings of your work guide your next moves' (Charmaz, 2006: xi). This process of 'swimming in the data' and 'swimming in the literature' is not linear and my own coding regime takes account of the 'back and forth' nature of

coding and categorising, or rather, of the 'zig-zagging pattern' (Layder, 1998: 76) of conceptual analysis.

Given this coding, I am able to present the data according to the organisational themes (Layder's 'Bridging Concepts' (Layder, 1998)) of identity, pedagogy and practice and relationships to others to which I apply the craft lens (Sennett, 2008). I also demonstrate this coding process in *Appendix M*. This is presented to create openness around the data and organisational themes, ensuring the research is compliant with Seale's (1999) 'fallibilistic' recommendations for the measurement of quality in research.

4.9 Conclusion

In adopting a qualitative approach, I am aware of the challenge for qualitative methods to truly 'get close' to those they research. This is the aim of much qualitative research, including the research here, but is problematic. This is the problem '...of bridging the gap between informants' socially situated subjectivities and their actual practice' (Hookway, 2008: 95). In using blogs in this research as a qualitative approach to encourage participants to 'talk about' their 'life' as enacted out in the social world, it is important to recognise that this 'life' as described by participants is removed from the situation where data is gathered. For example, in qualitative methods such as an interview or a focus group, the 'speaking about' life always occurs removed from the actual lived experience. Gathering and generating data is a social experience, but one that speaks of another social experience located somewhere else. This is essentially a problem of asking social actors to speak about actions, beliefs, values and meanings removed from the site of action. One way to work within and work around this methodological challenge is to use coding to explore in a systematic way responses (Layder 1998; Charmaz, 2006); another solution is to obtain 'real-world' artefacts such as diaries and other primary sources (Toms and Duff, 2002); a third solution is to directly observe action, although still recognising that 'what one sees' and 'what things mean' might be quite different. Another solution would be to ask social actors to capture experience

in a more immediate way, drawing upon notes, diaries, audios, reflections made closer to the point, location and time of action. This is the methodological choice in this thesis. This is still 'removed' – there is no way around this – but might help to 'get closer'. It is this desire to 'get close' that informs the choices presented in this chapter: to reappropriate the use of a blogging platform online within a broad ethnographic paradigm, and in doing so create a reflective space where novice teachers can talk communally about their practices, co-constructing the meaning of these practices in so doing. The next chapter, *Findings*, explores the nature of the data generated as well as the results and how these address the research questions.

Chapter 5 Findings

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the results from the ethnographic blogging are considered, with a view to demonstrating how the reflections, blog posts, interactions and narratives constructed point to stories of frustration, oppression, confusion, anxiety, success and autonomy. The novice teachers experience these multiple transitions as a 'rollercoaster' of change: *'I would compare it with a roller coaster ride at Thorpe park! Last year I was queuing with my ticket, this year I am on the ride!'* [Laura, year 1 cohort]. Or, as Anna (from the year 2 cohort) puts it, *'I started on the 1st of September and really quickly realised that I needed to take off my trainee shoes.'*⁴ The research suggests that the context of educational and workplace reform in the lifelong learning sector in England allows for the possibility of newly formed identities and craft practices, which are complex and multi-faceted. Craft is viewed here as a distinctive orientation to practice and identity. On the one hand, a 'desire to do work well' (craft) (Sennett, 2008) can result in a professional orientation to work that makes current neo-liberal workplace reform and resulting cultures of performativity and managerialism difficult to work within. On the other hand, it is possible to identify resilient identities based upon secure notions of craft. These resilient identities form the basis for novices to resist and subvert a cultural normalizing to the (positioned as out-dated and undesirable) practice of others. In other cases still, if a secure craft identity is not established, identity, practice and relationships

⁴ Data presented in this chapter is reproduced using the punctuation, grammar and spelling of the original blog posts. The format of the data has been changed – from the fonts used in the blog – but the rest remains as originally typed by the participants themselves. Reproducing text 'as it originally appeared' here, add an ethical authenticity to the language and contributions made by the participants – part of what I have referred to as the ethics of a '*netiquette*' (following Mann and Stewart, 2000) in *Chapter Four*.

with others can be highly fragile and fractured and damaged - these stories show that the mismatch between craft expectations and the reality of the lifelong learning workplace leaves a 'painful beginning' to use the language of Huberman (1989).

In this research, these multiple and complex relationships and novice practices are best understood and explained when viewed through the lens of 'craft' which renders understandable the challenges, opportunities and troubling times for the novice teachers in the sample. Through this, the stories in the data present a range of craft-based approaches to novice teachers' initial work and they present teacher identities as active and worked on, yet potentially also fragile. The novices need resilience to cope with change, while identity is framed by the socio-cultural contexts of first-time employment: identities are not ready-formed after training but in transition.

To present these results, consideration will be given to the nature of the participants, the relationships formed and how the blogging worked 'in practice'. Following this, the data is organized into three initial themes: (1) *identity*, (2) *pedagogy and practice* and (3) *relationships with others*⁵. These three initial themes act as organisational themes for this chapter, and within these issues of *craft* (Sennett, 2008) are explored.

5.2 Relationships and participation

Each sample, from each of the two successive years of blogging, ended-up with 5 participants. By way of introduction to these novice teachers, they are presented here, in *Tables 5.1* and *5.2*, with names of participants changed for confidentiality, as promised to the cohorts at the start of the research.

⁵ See *Appendix M* for examples of the coding that led to the identification of these initial themes, which are understood here as sub-organisational devices to better explore the key conceptual device of 'craft'.

Table 5.1 Overview of the year 1 cohort

| | | |
|---|---|-------------------|
| Abigail Teacher of art and design – mainly textiles and jewellery design | Employed to work in a large FE college teaching on more vocationally-focused programmes | North West London |
| Reena Teacher of English and drama | Initially employed to work in the separate sixth form centre of a school consortium. | Essex |
| Susie Teacher of media and film studies | Employed to work in a Sixth Form College teaching mainly A Level provision | Surrey |
| Laura Teacher of English and literacy | Employed in a large FE college teaching mainly adult and entry-level literacy as part of a functional skills curriculum | West London |
| Hayley Teacher of art and sculpture | Teaching in FE but working on ‘higher education’ foundation and access programmes – teaching adults, hourly paid. | Central London |

Table 5.2 Overview of the year 2 cohort

| | | |
|---|--|-------------------|
| Anna Teacher of art | Employed in a large FE college and teaching a wide range of art-based programmes and levels including 'academic' and 'vocational' programmes | North London |
| Carina Teacher of English and adult literacy | Working across two institutions with two part time/fractional jobs. In one institution she is teaching younger learners and in the other mainly adults | North London |
| Robert Teacher of English | Working in an urban, multi-cultural Sixth Form College | East London |
| Kim Teacher of business studies | Working in a Sixth Form college mainly teaching vocational learners | South London |
| Mandy Teacher of media production | Working in a large FE college | South east London |

In terms of the self-selected nature of the sample I note on hindsight that those who participated have, perhaps, a similar subject-orientation. Previous literature exploring occupational roles in the English lifelong learning sector develop conceptualisations of those who teach as having a 'dual professionalism' (Orr, 2009; Orr and Simmons, 2010; Plowright and Barr, 2012; Lucas, 2013) whereby teachers are both 'teachers' and also 'practitioners' of a vocational subject. In considering the nature of the subject specialism of those in the sample, it is

worth noting that the majority here come from art, media and English backgrounds. It maybe that these participants have a sympathy with some aspects of reflective practice, their own positionality, new social media and text due to their prior learning and practice experiences. As I note in chapter 4, choice of online method is often compounded by the familiarity and pre-existing experience the researcher has with the tool (Beneito-Montagut, 2011; Baker, 2013). The narrowness and similarity of the sample might also indicate that this would also be true for the sample themselves.

To further introduce the novice teachers whose stories are told through the data, I will briefly explore how they participated in the research while at the same time reflecting upon the nature of the relationships they had with each other and also with my own various complex roles within the research and their practice. Firstly, **Abigail [year 1]**: Abigail posted a great deal – and in some senses ‘set the tone’ for the participation of others. I had supported Abigail through her ‘micro teaching’ while on the ITE programme as her assessor and this is something she referred to on a number of occasions while undertaking the blogging. My interventions into the feedback of her micro-teaching while in my classes was a key moment for her in her professional learning and from that point she often used me, as a tutor, for critical reflection in a very open way although I was not her actual assessor. I suspect her involvement in the research was seen by her as an extension of this support, and this was something that certainly fitted-in, ethically, with my desire to both build community and relationships but also to develop an ‘epistemology of doing’ (Rybas and Gajjala, 2007). **Reena [year 1]**, like Abigail, posted a great deal. Often Reena and Abigail would ‘chat amongst themselves’ and it was clear that they had developed a friendship both from the PGCE ITE programme before joining the research and this continued through the research.

Susie [year 1]: Susie was a novice teacher who I observed teach when she was on the PGCE PCET. I was her assessor, and she often referred to this on the blog – to lessons I had seen or previous conversations we had. On

hindsight, **Laura [year 1]** contributed some very insightful comments while at the time was someone who was slightly 'lost' against the frequency of the regular and long and detailed posts of others. In contrast, **Hayley [year 1]** made less posts herself but interacted well with others, frequently added to posts to turn them into 'threads', whereas **Anna [year 2]** contributed more than any other participant over the two years in terms of the length of posts (in terms of word count). As a trainee teacher I observed her and was her assessor and she also worked in an institution that after her involvement in the blogging offered in-service placements in successive years of the PGCE PCET programme I taught on. This means I saw her on a regular basis after the research came to an end, albeit in a different role. During her involvement in the research Anna also visited the next cohort of my own students at the university – on my invitation – to talk to them about work in the sector as a novice teacher. Anna's posts were frequently humorous and at times caustic and in making these comments she frequently 'set' many ideas and terms that later became 'threads'. Anna was responsible for the use of the terms '*pitch forks*' and '*floral ladies*' that became widely adopted by others (see *Table 5.4*, later).

Carina [year 2] was the only participant to use a 'name' on the blog that did not resemble her own. Her *nom de plum* (or 'handle' in the online context) made reference to her imagined character and style. I ensured she introduced herself fully to all participants so as to avoid confusion, but was free to name herself as she wanted for the purposes of the blogging. **Robert [year 2]** was the only male in the sample. While Robert was slower to join than some of the others, and while he posted less than others (especially Kim and Anna), he was very consistent and regular in his engagement with the blog. He was perhaps more than others treating the blogging as a regular diary entry, but in doing so still nonetheless interacting with others towards whom he was very supportive. He needed some encouragement, perhaps more than others in his year of fieldwork, to make the first 'Hello World' post and instead 'lurked' (Orgad, 2005) for a few days at the start. Through his posts he referred to me as '*El Kidd*' which I suspect was a nick-name from the employment setting he joined as he was employed in the Sixth Form College that I was once a Senior Leader at,

amongst staff who used to be my own colleagues. **Kim [year 2]** is perhaps the only member of the sample who breaks the mould of the subject specialisms of the other participants. Rather than being an art, media or English teacher, Kim teaches business. Along with others such as Anna in the same fieldwork cohort [year 2], Kim posted a great deal. **Mandy [year 2]** was very measured in her posting, but eventually posted the least. What she had to say was very open and supportive of others, but she was clearly busy and the blogging was an additional burden on her time.

In blogging with these novice teaches there began, almost from the onset, an offline 'real world' parallel to the online blogging: many of the participants knew each other and had developed friendships from their previous PGCE PCET programme. Others developed offline friendships as the blogging progressed. On occasions online comments and 'posts' and 'replies' referred to these other, offline communications (phone calls, text messages, meetings). For example,

'...[name of another participant], I think we're only down the road from each other, we should swap notes one evening and help each other out! I have only just realised (!) about the comments attached to our blogs so I will now get into the practise of 'replying'!' [Abigail, year 1 cohort]

The blogging quickly amassed a large volume of text, with most participants making lengthy posts similar to diary entries but then using more immediate and shorter responses to reply and comment to each other when interacting (see *Appendices G and K*), as *Table 5.3* summarises. Participants were replicating the traditional 'diary' origins of a blog, but then interacting in speedier ways, subverting the usual precedent for blogs to be sole-authored (Hookway, 2008). What became apparent was the efficiency of the communication and also the response times. Participants set-up alerts on mobile devices to tell them when posts were made and most were able to access the full functionality of the site

on mobile devices ‘on the move’. They did this collectively, without my recommendation, and I then followed the practice myself.

Table 5.3 Overview of asynchronous interaction

| | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|---|---|
| Pilot study | 3 participants | 3 months duration | 38 posts 22 ‘replies’ 38 researcher contributions |
| Fieldwork year 1 | 5 participants | 9 months (an ‘academic year’) duration | 43 posts 65 ‘replies’ 26 researcher contributions |
| Fieldwork year 2 | 5 additional participants | 4 months (first ‘term’ of new employment) | 36 posts 58 ‘replies’ 19 researcher contributions |

5.3 Blogging in practice

By way of an introduction to the findings, I will briefly explore the nature of the blogging in practice and the implications this has for the data collected. The blogging started with each of the two successive cohorts just before the new term of the new academic year – the first year of employment. Over the summer participants were invited to join the blog and in doing so encouraged to introduce themselves to the group. In digital media this is usually referred to as a ‘Hello World’ post and the novice teachers were encouraged to explain to each other where their jobs were and what sort of levels and programmes they would be teaching on (see *Appendix F*):

'So, I'm [real name] I'm teaching adults at [name of institution]. I'm currently teaching Sculpture classes and Glass classes. My set up will be very different to yours in that I'm an hourly paid Lecturer (but on a contract, if that makes sense?!) and I am teaching adults. The [name of institution] is a little gem in terms of teaching as we each take responsibility for our Departments and specialisms. (The centre takes on Industry professionals who run their classes independently - so no Head Of Dept overseeing my scheme of work, as her specialism isn't glass or sculpture!) I'm over the moon to be teaching both glass and sculpture classes, as it's a very niche specialism, and a role which I didn't expect to find, so I'm feeling very very lucky.' [Hayley, year 1 cohort]

Some joined earlier than others and in a couple of cases some 'lurked' on the blog for a few days (reading the posts of others without contributing) before then taking part:

'Hi all! I'm a bit of a latecomer to the blog, so would like to say a virtual hello to everyone and looking forward to sharing thoughts about our teaching'. [Hayley, year 1 cohort]

'Hi all - it's great to read what's going on with everyone and so interesting...sorry I haven't posted again before now.' [Abigail, year 1 cohort]

My own complex and prior relationships with the sample – as their ex-teacher and ex-observer while training as a pre-service trainee – further potentially complicates the truth of what is presented here and the processes adopted. As I have written in my research journal at the time, there is *'more than one Warren here'*, when thinking about my own presence on the blog – as researcher, ethnographer, online mediator, ex-tutor, teacher, ex-assessor of the participants. As an (digital) ethnographer it is possible to be situated as both

insider/outsider and also as an 'other'. Researchers often travel to a field separate from their own, yet the representation of the self that is posted and constructed in online spaces has the potential to even further remove the ethnographer. In second-order online spaces such as the one constructed for this research, the self presented potentially confuses and troubles the notion of the ethnographer as an immersed 'looker' or 'observer'. In the case of this research, it is possible to identify multiple presences. The ontological and physical/virtual and temporal practice of 'being there' changes as the presence changes: the researcher role can be, as in the case of this research, teacher, moderator, researcher, other and insider. The novice teachers recognize these ambiguous and multiple roles that I occupied and occasionally indicate this in their posts and comments. For example, Abigail in the year 1 cohort says:

'One of my problems is that I do things too thoroughly. Warren, I remember after my second micro teach, you commented how thorough/detailed the rationale and lesson plan was and said something like, 'really great, but you can't do this for every lesson'...I agreed, I agree, but I still do it (inner cursing).'' [Abigail, year 1 cohort]

'I can't tell you why I have been finding it so difficult and such hard work. The PGCE (as I tell everyone, not just because you're in on this Warren (!) was such a fantastic course and I couldn't fault it. I am at my dream college, with dream facilities and students, teaching my dream subject on a dream timetable...' [Abigail, year 1 cohort]

The novice teachers might on occasion talk about things that they think (after knowing me as their tutor) I might 'disapprove of', noting *'Warren, just ignore this if you can...'* [Carina, year 2 cohort] before 'revealing' a sensitive truth. Equally, they might reveal aspects of their personal lives previously unknown: *'Warren I have never told you this, but you need to understand...'* [Hayley, year 1 cohort]. While there is recognition that 'Warren the tutor' is present, sensitive

and open conversations go on nonetheless. On occasions the participants asked questions directly to me – seeking my advice on some of the experiences they were having. I answered openly and honestly in all cases, but also always tried to reposition my comments back to the group to encourage more interaction. On other occasions I was emailed ‘offline’ from the blog, where the teachers asked more sensitive issues that they did not wish to share with the group. Due to my former role as their teacher, again, I responded as I would with any ex-student. In this way I ended-up replicating my own version of the ‘offline’ in parallel with the ‘online’ which in itself, as a second-order site, is itself in parallel with another ‘real’ site of practice – their actual teaching institutions.

The sample is aware that their reflective practice (encouraged by the blog due to the nature of the task itself) can also be a highly reflexive process. In this way, reflection on identity and practice helps the novices to overcome dilemmas and the confusion of difference in those first few months of new employment. As part of the interactions directly to me through the blog I was asked on a few occasions ‘is it working?’ – did the blog suit my research needs. Alongside this question there was always recognition from the teachers that it was ‘working for them’ and providing a space to communicate, but they wished to know if it was useful ‘for me’. Below (presented in full) is one of my responses to these types of questions:

‘Hello everyone. A couple of you have emailed me recently to say ‘sorry for not posting much’ and also ‘is it working (in terms of my research)?’...Firstly, post as much as you want; it would be good to get something every week - there will be times when you have more to say, and also times when you have less. Do also make an effort to read others’ contributions and post comments if you can....So, it is working? Well, I don’t know! You are all generating some really really interesting comments, so this is producing ‘data’ that I can use. But I am holding back from coding the data until much later on, so that I can simply concentrate on being someone who is here on this blog reading your

thoughts alongside you. A few of you have said it is useful when I ask direct questions - so I will do this from time to time, if it helps? Another thing, please do not worry about moaning - say what you feel. We are all teachers, and we all now know what it is like! It is an amazing job, but caring about doing well (as you all do) means that you do sometimes end up frustrated.....it is more than okay to share this. But for all our collective well-being, tell us about the highs too... Finally, in terms of 'is it working' - I guess I need to ask that of you all. Does it help having a small group of people to share thoughts with? Does it help to read each others'? This is your site as much (if not more so) than mine - so - is it working?

[Researcher post]

Once the blogging was underway I started to save the data securely offline to protect it in the eventuality of a system or platform failure. To make the data ready to be rendered intelligible, beyond (yet taking into consideration) the lay-actors' own accounts, data also needed to be re-ordered. The data was removed from the 'reverse chronology' of blogging posts where interactions between participations occur as 'replies' to 'posts' and subsequently presented in a format where it was possible to see who said what and in what order. All through the process I maintained a 'presence in the field'. I tried to allow the novice teachers to set the agenda for the posts, only posting long 'questions' at times when the frequency of communication seemed to lag. This required both constant monitoring but also careful and sensitive management. When the novice teachers posted and set conversational themes I tried to ask questions and seek explanations. In this way, the digital ethnographer dealing with blogs, like any ethnographer dealing with the richness of human social and cultural practices '...strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong' (Geertz, 1973: 452). If the role of the ethnographer when faced with screens of posts on the blog (see the screenshots in *Appendix D*) is to put the 'Technicolor' back-in (Mann and Stewart, 2000) then after coding this is achieved by offering a theoretical and conceptual frame within which to understand the practices being described, albeit one rooted in the explanations of the participants themselves. In these processes I am inherently wedded to

the view that ‘...social analysis is a humanistic and interpretative endeavour’ (Layder, 1998: 109), and tried to show the participants my thoughts in asking them to ‘check my thinking’ to see if they felt I was correctly representing what they were saying. For example,

‘I get the sense that many of you feel 'burdened' by the role now it is 'real' as opposed to the training and practice on the PGCE? Is this the case, or am I misreading the posts? Many of you are saying the time you now spend is huge in terms of marking and preparation...do other teachers seem to find this also a 'burden', or is it just being new? What I think I am asking is, is the whole profession feeling under pressure - or just new recruits, until things settle down? What do you all think?’ [Researcher post]

In all, the blogging provided opportunities for the generation of co-constructed data across what would usually be great boundaries of time and space and as such, allows for the development of a ‘thick description’. This places the inquiry firmly within an ethnographic framework, albeit one that adopts online data collection methods. This is not a ‘relocating’ of ethnography (Beaulieu, 2007; Orgad, 2009) but rather stretching its traditional boundaries. Posts on the blog enable a space whereby ‘real’ habitual (Bourdieu, 1990) and identity practices can be articulated and (re)framed and (re)formed. In this sense, participation in the research is both reflective and reflexive for the novice teachers – which help social actors ‘work-up’ and ‘work-on’ the project of their ‘self’. The ethnographer can of course be ‘fooled by appearances’ (Horn, 1998), but needs to trust the descriptions provided by participants while critically rendering them meaningful. This is a double process of ensuring that conceptual frames can be developed to make-sense of the data and at the same time that the sense making provided by the researcher is intelligible back from the point of view of those participating in the research. This is a hallmark of the ‘bridging’ needed between lay-actors’ accounts of reality and lived experiences and those of the social scientist operating within an interpretative tradition (Layder, 1993). The experiences and ‘stories’ in the data generated through the blogging are both acted and enacted

in the lived experience in the teaching institutions and classrooms the novice teachers have joined. These experiences are (re)created as textual practices in the blogging itself through the telling of mutual stories and reflections. Participants in this ethnography are very self-aware of the need to practice, develop and work-on their teacher selves; and very aware of the performativity cultures this 'becoming' is contextualized within. The ethnographic data will be largely presented here as quotations from the blogging textual practices. At first glance, the selectivity of this data (its 'constructedness') is not visible to the reader, and such data might look as if it is mere reportage. As Geertz says, description alone is not enough to qualify as an ethnographic endeavour since,

'...it does lead to a view of anthropological research as rather more of an observational and rather less of an interpretive activity than it really is. Right down at the factual base, the hard rock, insofar as there is any, of the whole enterprise, we are already explicating: and worse, explicating explications. Winks upon winks upon winks...Analysis, then, is sorting out the structures of signification...' (1973: 9).

To develop the 'meaning' of the data, I will explore the application of the conceptual frame to this data in what now follows.

5.4 Drawing metaphors from the data

By way of introduction to the data, it is possible to identify some reoccurring themes or metaphors that preoccupy the novices in their communal reflections. Thomas and Beauchamp note the usefulness of metaphors when thinking about new teachers' identity: '...eliciting metaphors from new teachers showed us that....[metaphors] can provide insight into ways in which people conceptualise experience' (2011: 763). Across the two separate periods of fieldwork there are a noticeable number of ideas/themes/metaphors that regularly occur (see *Table 5.4*). This language appears in blog posts, and sometimes becomes the title for a 'thread' (for a list of some of the 'thread' titles across both years of the fieldwork see *Appendix J*) meaning they become

metaphors shared - they become adopted by others – extending the metaphor beyond those participants who originally used/coined the term. In noting, through the coding this language, this,

‘...reflects the broad range of perspectives that new teachers bring to a discussion of the development of their professional identities and serves to remind us that identity is a dynamic, ever-evolving concept’ (Thomas and Beauchamp, 2011: 767).

This language adopted by the novices, as illustrated in *Table 5.4*, runs all through the data.

Table 5.4 Metaphoric language used in blogging posts

| Language used | Implications for craft |
|--|--|
| Fear | Participants across both years had worries – expressed as strongly as ‘fears’ – over their own practice, fitting in and settling down into a new organisation, worries about the quality of craft practices that they could see around them, and concerns around doing the best quality job that they wished for themselves. |
| Time | ‘Time’ was, an ever-present concern or ‘fear’: time was seen to be always ‘running out’ and never enough to allow the novice teachers to catch-up with the workload. Some of this was seen to largely ‘get in the way’ of the quality of their craft practice. |
| Others (variously referred to as: ‘vampires’, ‘floral ladies’, ‘moaning | While the second cohort wrote more scathingly about their colleagues than the first, in both years of fieldwork it was the case that older colleagues were treated with mistrust. The novice teachers saw the craft practice of these more established colleagues as largely out-of-date. Many of the novice teachers |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| minnies') | tried to subvert and resist membership of some communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and operated 'outside' of these, developing confidence and autonomy in the quality of their craft. |
| Roller-coaster | Different participants used this term across both periods of fieldwork and also in the pilot as well. The novice teachers saw their boundary crossing as having a frantic nature or pace made-up of 'ups' and 'downs'. This movement over time over identity, practice, group membership and confidence was seen equally as exciting, challenging, limiting, and fear-inducing depending upon the setting and context. |
| Shock | Many participants spoke of the 'shock' of the new: workload, pressures, performativity cultures, quality of existing practice and also how established staff spoke about learners in negative ways. |
| Sleep | The issue of 'time running out' and the shock of workload were often expressed by the participants as having an effect on other non-work aspects of their life. A very common image was of 'having no sleep' due to worry or due to workload itself. |
| 'Paperwork' | Participants felt they had been shielded from some aspects of performativity cultures while a trainee teacher. In contrast, and linked to their 'shock', 'paperwork' was positioned as the antithesis of quality over craft practice. |
| 'Hate/like/love' | Strong emotions were expressed by the sample of both years around the job of teaching – their 'love' of craft, their 'hate' of poor standards, and their 'hate' of managerial processes. |

| | |
|------------|--|
| 'Mismatch' | This term – mismatch (or more precisely, 'pedagogic mismatch') – was first raised by those in the pilot and in various forms it is present in both year 1 and 2 of the fieldwork. The use of the term is usually linked to the positioning of the sample's craft as opposed to the practices of various colleagues. The quality of craft is seen to be 'mismatched' by some practices of some normative groups and also by aspects of managerial cultures. |
|------------|--|

These themes and ideas are ever-present through the threads that are generated, but what draws the data together are the notions of *relationships with others*, their *pedagogy and practice*, and also the development of their *teacher identity*. Through all this, the use of the craft (Sennett, 2008) conceptual lens will be applied. In general, the 'shock' felt by the novice teachers across both periods of fieldwork was expressed as being bound-up with time, work(over)load, confusion and surprise about mismatched expectations and what this means for difficulties with colleagues. To understand this, Sennett observes that '...though craftsmanship [sic] can reward an individual with a sense of pride in work, this reward is not simple' (2008: 9). In what follows, the novice teachers' stories demonstrate the consequences, challenges and complexities in trying to '...do a job well for its own sake' (Sennett, 2008: 9) within the highly turbulent English lifelong learning sector. It is not the case, though, to draw easy and simplistic conclusions from this 'shock' (between craft desire and actuality of work practices) and to always see it as having negative and limiting consequences. Some of the previous lifelong learning literature presents practice and identity location as a 'struggle' (Petrie, 2015; Daley, 2015; Orr, 2015; Taubman, 2015) that is certainly reflected in the data in this research. Most of the novice teachers in this sample ultimately remain positive, but some had 'easier' entry into the profession than others. Some see beginnings as something more mouldable and controllable than others do and in doing so resist and 'struggle' with their craft practice while struggling against the cultures they find themselves within. Other novices are deeply frustrated

that their craft cannot express itself in a fully realized way due to constraints and pressures of the working environment.

5.5 Theme 1 identity

At the start of the year novice teachers thought they would be 'more fully formed' than they discovered themselves to be. For example, from Abigail [year 1 cohort]: *'And then you stop teaching in May, June (really), lose all your powers over the summer and then as firm a start as a gunshot starting a race, you're in, it's all go and 'you're a professional', apparently, thinking, 'how does this work again?'. Honestly it's been a brutal shock!'*. This 'brutal shock' is the context within which identity is forged, albeit slowly for some: *'I find it hard to know if the 'character', the 'plus me' I feel I'm playing, sometimes, at the head of the class is the right one sometimes!'* [Abigail, year 1 cohort]. For Abigail, the surprise and shock of the first year was both a source of reflection and also professional anxiety. The unexpectedness of first employment was striking and this difference (between the training practicum) is something she notes on a number of occasions. As she says early on in her new role,

'I have been reflecting like mad, by myself (talking into my dictaphone on the drive home and playing it back on the drive to college) really trying to separate myself from the emotions and develop strategies to successfully deal with the stuff that's been getting to me!' [Abigail, year 1 cohort].

In these 'boundary crossing' practices (Heggen, 2008; Trent, 2013) the notion of 'separating from the emotions' is heightened by awareness of the suddenness of the new, and the difficulties in wanting to be an established teacher, yet 'starting again': *'In a profession where experience is as important as theory and learning, I have been starting again'* [Abigail, year 1 cohort]. Over time, the novices develop awareness of the professional self they construct and how this changes. As Abigail says half way through her year of first employment: *'I find (again, thinking about professional and personal identities merging) that I am becoming more confident, competent, able to use my initiative and act and make decisions quickly. The fear we ride (feel the fear*

and do it anyway') comes in many different forms!' [Abigail, year 1 cohort]. And then, towards the very end:

'...the character I am forming at the head of the class as the teacher, and my own personality are merging; Yes I think they are. I am becoming sterner, more assertive; first I surprised myself at being more assertive than felt 'myself', and I have found that part of my character now.' [Abigail, year 1 cohort].

5.5.1 Identity and the 'shock' of the new

The transition from 'shock' to developing confidence is affected by workload and differences in expectation placed upon these 'employed' teachers as opposed to their pre-service training routines. Reena [year 1 cohort] identifies this well when she remarks:

'The mindset of this new teacher: How is it different to being a trainee? It's on you now! ...There is a sense of - its up to you. This is what they are going to be tested on in 3 weeks time. OFF you go. EEEK!!!'

The shock of the difference between training and employed roles is made harder for Reena due to her feelings towards her students and how she feels they also judge her newly forming professional self. For example, Reena [year 1 cohort] says *'...its not me personally. Of course I know its not me, XXX, that they hate. It is me, teacher they don't know, that they hate. But it is hard to differentiate at times'*. Others in the cohort have responded to this difference in expectation, workload and identity differently. Using the example of Susie [year 1 cohort], she says: *'Taking off my trainee shoes. I started on the 1st of September and really quickly realised that I needed to take off my trainee shoes. I kept asking the head of department if it was ok to do things and kept showing him everything, he was like "yeh do whatever you want!!"'* Much earlier than others in the sample, Susie finds this freedom liberating and a strong source of professional identity:

'I feel completely settled, and like I've mentioned in the past, I am getting so much help and support but the others in the department. But over the last few weeks I think I have found my authoritative feet...' [Susie, year 1 cohort]

Laura, from the same cohort as Susie and Reena, initially struggles with the fluid nature of her identity, but eventually becomes comfortable with the professional identity she begins to form. She notes,

'I only felt like a teacher the other day, when one of my students saw me shopping and came up to me saying 'miss'...In the classroom i dont always feel like a teacher but I do command the room far more like a teacher than i used to previously. Within the staffroom I am respected as a professional and always asked for my opinions' [Laura, year 1 cohort].

The description of the transition and boundary crossing into employment and new identities as a 'roller coaster' is continued by Hayley [year 1 cohort]: *'I constantly feel on a roller-coaster of highs and lows'*. And again, *'It's been a roller coaster of emotions and development over the past couple of weeks and a steep learning curve'*. The year two cohort also remark very early on, on the difference in role and in 'feeling like a teacher'. Early in the employment Anna [year 2 cohort] says,

'It's different because I'm actually a member of staff and have responsibility. I have an established role and my colleagues and students know that. I can have an email signature. There is a (sort of) defined hierarchy. I'm able to make decisions without checking with someone first. People assume I'm responsible, and no one is really checking up on me (which is a good and a bad thing)'.

5.5.2 Identity and 'how real it all seems'

The development of identity is not, though, in isolation from the relationships developed with others around them and the perceived 'newness' and 'realness' of the new role. This informs reflections provided by Robert [year 2 cohort] when he says,

'Yeah I do feel real. The biggest part of that is being there from the start of term. Maybe it's being trusted to make decisions about how I teach but mainly I think it's having the classes from the beginning. Big difference - as you all made clear that it would be during the course. All the other

staff seem to treat me as an equal, if an overly keen, over-prepared and sometimes bewildered one'.

This is also echoed in the experiences of Kim who says, *'I have been really surprised by how 'real' it all seems, I definitely feel like a real teacher'* [Kim, year 2 cohort]. Although in Kim's example the established (and confident, secure) teacher identity is one she has developed almost in isolation from others: *'I feel like I crept in the back door and just joined in'* [Kim, year 2 cohort].

The novices emotionally feel the pressures of time and workload and this in turn affects how identities are formed. The 'starting again' with identity is sometimes framed as a process of going backwards: *'And it's hard to go backwards but I'm really trying now. I realise that it's now not so much of an inconvenience but a need; I'll burn out if not'* [Abigail, year 1 cohort]. The pressures of doing a job well, a key feature of the notion of craft for Sennett (2008) – and the moral weight of this - can lead to highly difficult and demanding first beginnings. Abigail [year 1 cohort] remarks,

'Sometimes so crushed by my own 'inadequacies,' so tired, feeling so underconfident and unsure of my decisions and so (still) afraid of the future (will I keep this job or not?) that I've felt right on the edge of keeping it all together; really shaken up, but despite it all certainly being the hardest, most challenging and testing thing I've ever embarked upon, I have known (almost) every minute that I love teaching, I'm just desperate to get it right, to be an outstanding teacher, now and always. And it's hard, for me at least, to remind myself under these circumstances, that of course I am still learning - I know we always are, but we're right at the beginning and it's ok to not be rehearsed, experienced, confident, knowledgeable about certain things'.

5.5.3 Identity and moral responsibility

For Abigail [year 1 cohort] the weight of the responsibility felt by the new teacher role is a key feature of her experience of boundary crossing and a fundamental part of the process of identity construction. As Trent notes, *'...identity as a trajectory focuses attention upon boundaries'* (2013: 262). There

is the need to ‘...consider the multiple boundaries that individuals cross’ (Trent, 2013: 262) as they enter new settings and contexts (Avis and Bathmaker, 2006; Wallace, 2002; Jephcote, Salisbury and Rees, 2008).

In Abigail’s case these boundaries pose issues of morality and ethics in her novice teacher practice, which reflects Sennett’s view that craft practice is a moral enterprise and moral ‘location’ for identity and practice, but one which can lead to frustration and disappointment when not realized (Sennett, 2008). For example, she comments, *‘I don’t feel burdened...I feel a great responsibility’*. In unpacking this further, she draws a distinction between the PGCE PCET training and the ‘realness’ of the first employed teaching year. This is linked to a ‘sense of pressure’ and the moral weight of this. This echoes the literature from Sennett (2008) when he speaks of Doctors and nurses in the English NHS having a moral commitment to their work that counters the pressures and cultures of capitalist work. This is a key element in a craft identity that supports agency and resilience. In the blogging, Abigail [year 1 cohort] reports a much more supportive professional learning environment where she can *‘seek advice from others to help’* while at the same time recognising that in this situation it is *‘easier to put new strategies in place as a full-time teacher rather than a trainee’*. What drives Abigail is a clear commitment to *‘working with dynamic practices and have some ownership over my own pedagogy’*. Ultimately, this is contextualised by the feeling that *‘...despite this being the hardest and most challenging thing I have ever done I know that (almost) every minute I love the teaching, but I am desperate to get it right’*. She is able to draw upon useful role models and exemplars of good practice in the work of others: *‘I think I have changed my path to developing my pedagogy by admiring some characteristics of other teachers’*. She also notes that, by the end of the first year, she is *‘finding the right ‘character’ to be at the front of the class’* and *‘becoming more articulate; more able to express myself’* as well as *‘growing up, changing’*. Abigail concludes:

‘I’m talking about a personal and individual responsibility rather than a professional one, and it is heavy, but I wouldn’t associate it with negative connotations. There is definitely a sense of pressure; that this is the real thing, that you’ve done the dress rehearsal and should know what you’re

doing...but I have found that feeling is starting to subside now; I think I have worked hard at not letting that pressure effect my practice and my own learning process. But I felt it chronically at the start'.

It is the sense of doing a 'good job' (craft) and the worthwhile nature of the career, of the responsibility that enables Abigail to eventually feel in control of her own practice and of who she is becoming. Other novice teachers have felt it differently – due to the context they work in and the relationships they develop with others around them. Reena [year 1 cohort] says when thinking about the differences between novice employment and training, *'Whereas this is IT. This is what I have been training for and I have actually wanted to do for my whole life'*. Reena's identity makes her conscious of the moral and ethical aspects of her work now she has made this transition into the novice role:

'What's the same as when I was a trainee? That I am still enthusiastic about teaching and that I want to spark something in these kids and help them learn stuff. And not just stuff, but the tools to think about other things too. I want to help them question what's around them and not just go along with the herd, to realise that they are worth something and they can achieve something with their life' [Reena, year 1 cohort].

5.5.4 Identity within the neo-liberal workplace

The pressures of institutional responses to neo-liberal policies of 'inspection' and performativity is something that has really stood out in the stories this data has generated. The new teachers in this research are all too conscious of the anxieties produced by performance cultures (Avis, 2003). With performance-orientated cultures comes a constant demand upon the time of new teachers, often not allowing space for critical reflection. Pre-service teachers, becoming novice and established teachers, need to accommodate and rethink prior learning (Yandell and Turvey, 2007): *'I can already see that I will have to purposefully adjust my pedagogical style from that which I have practised over the past year'* [Hayley, year 1 cohort]. And yet, at the same time: *'I have known (almost) every minute that I love teaching, I'm just desperate to get it right, to be an outstanding teacher, now and always'* [Abigail, year 1 cohort]. These novice teachers accommodate shifts in professional learning and the re-situation (Lave

and Wenger, 1991) of learning within the ever-present backdrop of the 'rapid change' (Lucas, 2004) of policy reform (BIS, 2011a; 2011b). Teacher identities are transforming, as they are contextualised by the structural forces of the organisations entered. Susie and Laura [both year 1 cohort] have both suggested in various ways that the desire to do a job well (craft) is undermined by the performativity cultures around them (O'Leary, 2015). Susie says, in response to the observational cultures at her institution, *'I am doing my very best, and it almost feels like I'm fighting a losing battle'* [Susie, year 1 cohort]. As Sennett comments, *'...(T)he craftsman's workshop is indeed a cruel school if it activates our sense of inadequacy'* (2008: 97). In Susie's case she feels pulled in so many different directions and sees her practice suffering. The quality of the craft is being compromised. She has so many different pressures and multiple tasks she asks, *'Can I Multiply Myself'* [Susie, year 1 cohort]. Laura agrees with the authenticity of the craft being eroded by pressures of performativity. These pressures are often seen to be the result of institutional responses to neo-liberal policy agendas, especially 'performance' and 'audit' cultures. Laura says,

'My college is also about to be inspected by Ofsted within the next few weeks, so management are currently running around like headless chickens, with emails constantly flowing with changing SOWS and lesson plan templates! Lecturers are now being advised to compile teaching files (which were not evident here previously) and strangely other lecturers are now referring to me for advice. Even stranger that actually listen to me too, so I know my work is respected here, much more in fact than my placement college' [Laura, year 1 cohort].

Yet these policy responses as they 'settle' in the institution create a space for Laura [year 1 cohort] to feel positioned as a craftsman [sic] with something to offer others from her craft practice repertoire. She sees herself both restrained yet also having some autonomy over her craft: *'My time is much more restricted and I find myself doing much of the paperwork at home, as my time is always consumed in staff meetings! My associate head gives me far too much freedom in respect of setting my own briefs and projects....to a point where I double check with him before releasing new projects to students'*. The pressures of the

landscape do often show through though: *'As for me I have been snowed under with observations!'* [Laura, year 1 cohort].

The bureaucratic and managerial culture developed in some FE settings as a result of neo-liberalism is seen by some novices to undermine a 'pure' pedagogy. As Sennett notes, '...technical understanding develops through the powers of imagination' (2008: 10), but some novice teachers feel they lack the opportunities for this. For example, for Anna [year 2 cohort], pedagogy is compromised by the 'realities' of doing the paid job as opposed to the more 'idealised' form of practice from the training year. She says,

'A new hourly-paid lady started yesterday, who worked for Alexander McQueen, so she has loads of industry experience, but no teacher training. I found myself giving her a cowboy guide to teaching. Its like I understand the theory and practise of what I'm supposed to do, I just almost can't be bothered to do the prep sometimes and put it all together. Everyone else just seems to blag it and be quite unprepared, so it's making me really lazy.'

The demands of the institutional culture Anna finds herself in is experienced in an unsettling way, but is something also recognised by the others around her: *'Generally I feel mentally prepared for all the paperwork, and the actual teaching (most of the time), its just the responsibility and pressure I'm unprepared for. The endless meetings and procedures I have to go through'* [Anna, year 2 cohort]. Anna also says,

'I'm hoping that it'll settle down a bit when I get into the swing of things, but I just feel broken right now. Colleagues say this is totally normal at this time of year, and everyone's trying to run up the down escalator. As soon as you feel like you've done all your paperwork, more appears from somewhere.' [Anna, year 2 cohort]

For Carina this 'unpreparedness' feels like a 'step back': *'I'm absolutely knackered; I'd forgotten how exhausting it is but in a weird way I like feeling this tired. I definitely feel like I've just stepped back onto the PGCE hamster wheel though'* [Carina, year 2 cohort]. Her tiredness a result of the 'paperwork' created

around managerial cultures. The blogging practices themselves help the cohorts to see that others often experience this same feeling of being overloaded: *'...glad it's not just me feeling 'overwhelmed''* [Mandy, year 2 cohort]. Mandy continues to say, *'I have been feeling so overwhelmed by the organisation, paperwork, forms, uploading of resources, keeping up with the daily changes to courses, rooms, paperwork and also the paperwork has been a bit challenging...did I mention the paperwork?'* [Mandy, year 2 cohort].

5.6 Theme 2 Pedagogy and practice

The craft practice of others is seen by some novices as in stark contrast to the quality of their own practice. As Reena [year 2 cohort] puts it: *'The pedagogy around me? Hmmm'*. This is linked to ideas of 'the unknown' practice of others in 'real' settings making novices re-think pedagogy from the practicum. For Carina, the insecurity of the unknown is a key feature of her first posts when exploring her classroom practice: *'I hate feeling like I don't know what I'm doing'* [Carina, year 2 cohort].

Anna, like the others in the first year cohort, often finds herself struggling with indecision, fear and a sense of not fitting in and not teaching in the same way as the others around her:

'I have a constant fear sometimes that I'm not doing well enough, and that I actually don't know what I'm doing. I think I'm going to be found out and chased away with pitchforks. I feel a bit like an imposter. I have a better foundation of training than all the rest of my team, but I just wish I had some more art-specific skills' [Anna, year 2 cohort].

What motivate many of these posts are perceptions of the 'quality' of practice (the novices' own and of others') and of 'doing a good job' in Sennettian terms.

5.6.1 Pedagogy and 'doing a good job'

For Sennett (2008) the hallmark of craftsmanship [sic] – that of 'doing a good job' – is an ethical location. As such, it can be the basis of agency on the one hand, but, given workplace restraints, on the other can be a source of

frustration and demotivation. In the interests of doing a good job self-imposed pressures are clearly felt by the novice teachers. For example, *'... I can over think things and in a way, being at such a high performing college with very high expectations makes me feel ever so slightly uneasy - constantly reevaluating the value of everything I do and prepare, constantly making u-turns and changing my mind'* [Abigail, year 1 cohort].

When discussing issues of (the 'craft' of) pedagogy, novice teachers refer to feeling a loss of time and of the experience of lesson planning with such a larger timetable than before as being a challenge. Time is a constant reference in the blog posts by all participants and often linked to feelings of (lack of) well being and general concerns about 'preparedness'. Sennett notes, *'...there is nothing inevitable about becoming skilled, just as there is nothing mindlessly mechanical about technique itself'* (2008: 9). The novices feel they would be more skilled and more prepared than they are, and this is initially a surprise. They thought initially it would be more 'inevitable' than it actually is. They initially fail to see that 'being skilled' might be affected by crossing into new employment settings. For many of the participants then, the 'shock' at the boundary crossing is seen as a process of 'starting again' – not just with identity and establishing confidence but also with the quality of and pressures upon practice itself. The pressure of time within the context of new employment responsibility also affects craft. Anna [year 2 cohort] notes this when she remarks that,

'I've stopped doing lesson plans (obviously), and everything seems to be planned just before the event. I wish I had more time for forethought and planning, but I don't. I'd love to be able to make amazing, challenging and differentiated resources, but I don't physically have the time, or I wouldn't have any life left at all'.

Many of the novice teachers feel that the quality of their practice is under 'threat' and they also recognize the impact on this of 'measuring' quality through performance and observational cultures (O'Leary, 2013; Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2014). As Orr notes,

‘...FE is threatened by the introduction of competition in place of local planning; it is threatened by measures of quality that ignore what is meaningful when what is meaningful is difficult to measure; and it is threatened by encroaching privatization’ (2015: 175).

For example, as Laura [year 1 cohort] reflects:

‘My college has brought in consultants to observe all teaching staff before the dreaded offsted inspection. The atmosphere here is like a pressure cooker waiting to blow! Staff have complained about too much paperwork and not enough time on what really matters like teaching. I am inclined to agree at the moment.’

5.6.2 Pressures upon pedagogy and practice

Pressures of time are seen as a barrier to the sorts of pedagogic practice and craft performance that the novice teachers would otherwise like to be engaged with. These pressures come in part from the ‘turbulence’ of the lifelong learning workplace (Dixon *et al*, 2010). The sense that ‘craft’ might be ‘pressured’ is also recognized by Sennett: ‘...(T)he craftsman often faces conflicting objective standards of excellence; the desire to do something well for its own sake can be impaired by competitive pressures, by frustration, or by obsession’ (2008: 9). In some cases for these novice teachers the pressures to develop effective craft are self-imposed since their desires and ‘obsessions’ over practice are not accommodated by the conditions around them: *‘Some days I feel my workshops go really well, other times I feel like they could have gone better, but I guess that’s true of wanting to perfect anything in life and I’m not entirely sure you can ‘perfect’ teaching as everyday and every situation is new’* [Hayley, year 1 cohort]. For Hayley her commitment to her craft allows her to resist an institutional normalising process to try and take control over her emerging practice: *‘I seem to be the only one who has a problem with it. I feel stupid for having put my head up above the parapet on this one, but I do try to stand up for what I believe’* [Hayley, year 1 cohort]. She concludes by saying that *‘...it’s taken a few weeks to adjust and rethink my pedagogy, (which will always be continually evolving!)’* [Hayley, year 1 cohort].

Organisational structures and routines alongside work associated with inspection and quality assurance are seen as huge pressures: something that limits and restricts craft practice. Linked to issues of the 'pedagogic mismatch' over expectations and aspirations of craft practice, is the feeling by some that creativity is missing from their new practice (also seen to be a consequence of time). This is seen to 'deform' desired practice to a more undesirable existence.

Grounding ethics and morality in craft practice has already existed in the literature for some time (Coldron and Smith, 1999 and Hagger and McIntyre, 2006; Frayling, 2011; Derrick, 2011). Sennett links morality and desire to 'do a job well' with the basis for agency, since '...(T)he pursuit of quality is also a matter of agency, the craftsman's driving motive' (2008: 97). However, '...(A)gency is all to the good, but actively pursuing good work and finding you can't do it corrodes one's sense of self' (Sennett, 2008: 97). This is notable in the experiences of Anna. For Anna the 'transition' shock of entering a new setting other than her original pre-service placement was felt hard. She describes the '*utter mayhem*' of the setting and the strong performativity culture in place leading to negative relationships between her, colleagues and managers. Prior to leaving the research, half way through her first-year, she speaks in her blog posts of '*fighting a losing battle*' and being in '*meltdown*' – referring to both her own sense of professional practice and the organisation as a whole. This is seen by Anna to lead to an inability to develop agency over her own pedagogic practice: that she '*can't change a thing*'.

5.6.3 'Quality' and practice

The quality of practice is seen, by some, to be related to the infrastructure of the institutions they work in, and as such a barrier experienced by novices in a powerless way. Carina [year 2 cohort] recognises her craft is framed by conditions beyond her control:

'My uncomfortably hot, ill equipped, storage free, opening window free, awkward shaped classroom. Unfortunately there's no way I will get a better room. The HoTL's response was actually, 'Well, we have a space

issue in this building' and later 'we shouldn't have enrolled so many students.'

The issue of control and autonomy over craft – over both practice and the means to be ‘the teacher you want to be’ - is something the cohort are keen to take control of if possible. As Robert says, *‘No doubt there will be some bumps along the way but, so far, I'm enjoying this period much more than my training year, probably because I now have more control/responsibility and I've got these classes from the beginning. I can be clear about my expectations from the start and properly get to know the group’* [Robert, year 2 cohort].

Sometimes, though, dilemmas and pressures around ‘quality practice’ are self-imposed. Abigail starts her employment unsure of her ability to do a job well, especially as constrained by the workforce demands around her. She says, *‘I fear I'm not starting on the best foot as I have been working late every night, making things complicated for myself and although I don't start teaching a full time table until tomorrow, I am already shattered!’* [Abigail, year 1 cohort]. And later on, she notes, *‘I don't have a problem with working all the time but life is getting in the way a bit (which is obviously not the healthiest way to think!)’* [Abigail, year 1 cohort].

Using Sennett, it is possible to observe that, ‘...the craftsman’s desire for quality poses a motivational danger: the obsession with getting things perfectly right may deform the work itself’ (2008: 11). Taking the example of Anna [year 2 cohort] she reflects, when discussing planning and preparation, that,

‘I know that's awful’ ‘I feel like my actual teaching is suffering, because there's just too much other rubbish to do. I think also because its the first year, I have nothing planned for anything, and I don't know what might happen. When I get a moment to (mentally, rather than physically) reflect, I know what I could have done better, and will do so for next year. Plus I will be more confident in my delivery’.

The cohort certainly reacts to the pressures of doing practice ‘well’ differently, and in some cases they recognized the now ‘deformed’ nature of practice.

Some accommodate the pressures early on, whereas others find it constraining on practice. For example, Abigail finds the transition initially hard, seeing the pressures of the 'real' role very different from her training year. Eventually, though, she adapts and learns to see the opportunities for the improvement of practice from her new location:

'I think the opportunity to put strategies in place and improve your teaching as a full time teacher with responsibility for your groups and students and pedagogy is so much easier than as a trainee when you're seeing each group perhaps once a week and working with the dynamic and practices already set in the first few weeks of the year' [Abigail, year 1 cohort]. And again, *'That process of improving your teaching and trying new things and seeing results one way or another is so much more immediate and clear - not just because the pace is faster and your contact with groups and students is more regular but you can take ownership of it and really do something with it. Your class, your rules!'* [Abigail, year 1 cohort].

For Reena [year 1 cohort] workload and the managerial cultures ultimately make her practice difficult to shape in the way she would wish with the desired level of quality. In talking about workload and how managers monitor it, she says,

'The biggest thing that is worrying me at the moment is I am knackered. Like going to bed at 9pm and sometimes earlier knackered. I am basically getting home, doing some marking, eating and going to bed. I am not getting any time with my other half, he gets home at 8, when I am just stressing about finishing marking and on the verge of falling asleep' And continues later on to say, *'One of the things that struck me is the gross inefficiency of the place. Honestly - it is horrific and the paperwork!!! It is ridiculous - there are forms for everything and so much paperwork it is stupid. It makes me feel slightly sick to be honest, not to mention the sheer number of trees wasted each day. Even now I am still getting my head around all of the forms and the paperwork'* [Reena, year 1 cohort].

Reena's response to her painful beginning is to 'unbecome' (Colley, James and Diment, 2007) – to terminate her employment. She speaks in blog posts of feeling '*knackered*' and '*really exhausted*'. This pressure, feeling that the pace of first employment is overwhelming, is seen by Reena to be at odds with her '*sheltered*' experiences while in in-service placement. Unlike Anna who acutely feels the gaze of managerial surveillance, Reena feels quite the opposite: '*It's up to you now. Off you go*' and '*there is this sense that I am on my own here*'. Reena speaks of negative and uneasy relationships with her own students as well as with colleagues who she also positions as '*in tears each day sobbing*'. She recognises the need to develop the skills of '*managing management*' while also noting that at the same time this comes at a cost: '*Wasn't prepared for all the paperwork and the gross inefficiencies there is that actually stop me from teaching*'. In the end Reena quits her employment early, frustrated at how the quality of her practice has been compromised. Her last blogs on the research site noting that she also feels she '*made bad choices*' in how she managed the boundary-crossing experience in her first employment. Her desire to do a quality 'craft' practice were ultimately at odds with how she experienced the cultures of the workplace around her. In a similar way, Sennett (2008) suggests that the 'pace' or rate of learning for the development of craftsmanship [sic] is at odd with the 'quick wins' of a capitalist mode of production.

The narrative created by Hayley [year 1 cohort] stands in direct contrast from that of Anna's and Reena's stories above. This is an orientation to boundary-crossing experiences which is highly reflective and as such takes control, seeing that '*I will need to adjust my pedagogic style from that which I have practiced over the past year*' while in pre-service practicum. Through reflecting on her changed circumstances and accommodating this change, Hayley feels that while a '*steep learning curve*' she is able to manage the '*roller-coaster of highs and lows*'. As she says, '*everyday and every situation is new*' and within this, '*its taken some time to adjust*'. Ultimately, despite as she describes them the '*downs and bumps in the road*', she nonetheless feels she has the '*freedom to run my own*' – to take control of her own choices and decisions regarding her practice and its future direction.

5.7 Theme 3 Relationships with others

Relations with others are seen to both offer support and collegiality, or to be based upon managerial models. The European Commission note how important it is to ‘...respond to the need to break the isolation of the classroom and the "one teacher one classroom" doctrine. Building on the necessity to establish a culture of collaboration’ (2015: 5). Sennett urges the craftworker to ‘...not give up on the workshop as a social space’ (2008: 73) since relationships with others can be essential for growth and development. However, these collaborative cultures for some novice teachers are lacking. This has an effect upon identity formation and craft practice and its development. For the novice teachers in this ethnography practicing craft is located in and framed by the interplay and possible tensions between *sollen* [organisational need] and *woollen* [individual needs], and further compounded by relationships with colleagues. Sennett suggests that it is not the work as such that is the ‘problem’ but rather the cultures of the workplace: ‘...depressed workers like the British doctors and nurses suffer not so much from the work they do as by how it is organized’ (2008: 73). Applying this to the novice teachers, they are acutely aware of the performativity cultures they enter, and of the strained relationships resulting from such cultures. For Rouxel (2015) the performativity cultures in FE actively shape relationships between staff, leading to competition. As Daley has commented, there is ‘...a trend to undermine the value of experienced teachers’ (2015: 15). These cultures then set the context within which the novices reflect upon their relationships to others around them.

5.7.1 *Relationships with others and institutional normalizing*

From the novice teachers’ perception, practices are not necessarily shared and nor are they necessarily the product of the operation of communities of practice. Sennett notes the importance of agency within his theorisation of craft, but also recognises the role of relationships with others since, ‘...agency does not happen in a social or emotional vacuum, particularly good-quality work’ (2008: 97). Yet this resistance to workplace culture and institutional normalisation is far from simple. In the case of some novices, craft practices can enable individuals

– novice professionals – to resist and subvert cultural and institutional normalizing processes. This can also lead to conflict and exclusion from the cultural group. Whereas for some of the sample the institutional cultures they work within are restraining, Carina's [year 2 cohort] response to what she sees as inadequate teaching from colleagues and inadequate resources and planning is an act of reforming and repoliticisation. She says, *'I've never in my life felt so politically energised, and that feels good. Even though the current situation is pretty depressing'* [Carina, year 2 cohort]. But there is a limit to this autonomy given the current state of the employment sector: *'A couple of weeks ago I began to panic, I'm not going to get enough work, all these teachers are having their hours cut and the college is generally 'crap' according to them'* [Kim, year 2 cohort]. For Kim the colleagues around her are a source of ennui in the workplace and the pressures around managerialism and workplace reform leads to a competition that affects further these relationships with colleagues. She says,

'I think it's a case of being realistic. We all have mortgages/rent/unhealthy habits etc to pay for. We all want decent working relationships, maybe even socialise sometimes. We all want the work, some are willing to put themselves out more than others. But at the end of the day, and I'm not saying I agree or like this, it's dog eat dog' [Kim, year 2 cohort].

This context then frames her sense of wellbeing and also professional identity. Kim's context eventually becomes all consuming, making it almost impossible for her to develop a stable sense of her own craft practice because of how she sees the others around her:

'Not a pitchfork in sight, but plenty of turfing. I've been pleasantly surprised by the lack of pitchforks. Most other teachers have been really accommodating, offering help, resources etc. We just had a bit of a shock, hearing that the college is under threat of closure to make way for a primary school. This means we will be 'farmed out' to teach in other buildings such as libraries, children's centres etc, not ideal, in fact, if this happens I shall be looking for another job as I truly believe that having a base to work from where you can catch up with other teachers, swap

ideas, give support, discuss learners, courses and general stuff is really important' [Kim, year 2 cohort].

The novice teachers were often wary and sceptical of colleagues who were negative about learning and the learners themselves. As Bathmaker and Avis (2005a; 2005b) have already noted, trainee teachers have often had an 'overwhelmingly negative' image of existing practice and 'established' teachers, and in the case of these novice teachers this is no different. They often positioned their own 'craft' and 'quality' as separate from the existing communities of practice whose membership they sometimes sought to subvert or reject (Avis *et al*, 2002). Laura and Anna clearly do this – try and see themselves as separate from colleagues around them. As Laura says, '*...there are some teachers at my place that are completely flapping like headless chickens....asking me how to prepare their files!*' [Laura, year 1 cohort]. For Anna [year 2 cohort], colleagues clearly stand out as being not the sort of teacher she sees herself as. She says,

'My direct fashion team are all lovely middle-aged ladies with floral dresses that talk about gardening (not actually that bad, some are quite 'hip'), but it is very nice as they sort of treat me like a daughter a little bit. There's none of the pressure that I felt last year, as my fresh knowledge is putting me ahead of everyone. It surprises me what the level of teaching (well prep and paperwork) is. I know I will learn a lot from them, but it does feel like I have really achieved something as they employed me for the specific business experience and 'youth element', and it sets me apart from everyone else. I'm not constantly competing for the attention of the HoD, and trying to impress them into giving me a job like last year' [Anna, year 2 cohort].

Bathmaker and Avis suggest that trainee teachers in FE, when entering new and established groups of existing experienced colleagues '*...did not find this a basis of affinity with existing communities of practice. Rather, they told stories which attempted to contrast and distance themselves from experienced lectures*' (2005a: 56). In this data, some staff groups are quickly identified as displaying qualities and characteristics seen as undesirable; many blog posts

are spent identifying the characteristics of these colleagues in relation to the qualities these novice teachers wish to develop themselves. This perception of colleagues has perhaps varied the most amongst the novice teachers, more so than any other issue explored by them in their time posting together on the blogs. In discussing relationships with others, posts vary from examples of competition with others, supportive relationships, feelings of isolation, rejection of the 'out-dated' pedagogy of older staff and recognition that respect from colleagues and status in the eyes of others is highly prized. For Anna, *'I enjoy teaching as a job a lot more, but I don't want it to suck me in (like the vampires!)* [Anna, year 2 cohort]. In contrast, for Reena, *'But there is this sense that am on my own'* [Reena, year 1 cohort]. However, for Mandy [year 2 cohort]: *'I feel really supported though, definitely a lack of pitch forks. I am quite lucky though as in the school there are seven other newly qualified teachers just started so we literally are all thrown in together'*.

The 'help' Susie receives from colleagues is itself a source of frustration and she feels this erodes her independence and emerging practice:

'Problem is the head of department has a really different way of dealing with it, and he has been really supportive, and is really nice but has a tendency to come into my lessons and manage the behaviour of the class. Now if your thinking I am sounding moany I feel like I am to a certain extent being ungrateful, but on the other hand, its never been anything I can't handle and feel a bit like my toes are being stepped on' [Susie, year 1 cohort].

The experience of professional relations with '...others who share the same discomforts' is highly significant in developing secure professional identities and practices (Ball and Olmedo, 2013: 94). This point echoes Wenger's (1998; 2003) suggestion that boundaries are experienced in concrete terms rather than as an abstraction: they are 'felt', and that this is often shaped by relationships with others. The novice teachers are finding a '*mismatch*' (to use their term) with experienced staff, but they are drawing upon each other as a 'source of the same discomforts'. Given the performativity cultures and marketized forces at play in the sector, these are seen to place '...competition and the possibility of

performing better than your peers at the centre of the professional identity' (Rouxel, 2015: 133). However, while mistrustful of some colleagues, and appreciative of the support of others, it is possible to interpret differently the conflict and hostility these novices feel towards (some groups of) others. In the majority of these cases the novice teachers are striving to 'do a job well' and faced with what they see as others not demonstrating the same ethical commitment to craft practice. For Sennett, '...(T)he desire to do good work is seldom satisfied by just getting by' (2008: 45). In this research, novice teachers struggle to 'do well' and are frustrated by 'getting by' which they see as eroding otherwise effective and pleasurable good practice. As Daley notes, '...they are activists, their actions result in a version of liberation that is constrained by their semi-captivity' (2015: 13). Yet, the forces of competition and marketization do frame these relationships with others and this in turn means that neo-liberal workplace cultures are '...marked by the co-option of the professional identity of FE teachers into the marketization agenda' (Rouxel, 2015: 133). As Anna notes,

'Middle-Aged Ladies: I realised that everyone is a moaning-minnie, and all the full time staff have absolutely no context of the way things function outside the walls of college. That's quite harsh, but having sat through 3 hours of extended department meetings (twice), and listening to all the reasons why nothing works and the reasons against changing current college-wide policy has already jaded me slightly!' [Anna, year 2 cohort].

5.7.2 Relationships with learners

Positive or negative relationships with students (albeit affected by the actions of other staff and their behaviours and attitudes) are seen by the novice teachers in some ways more important than that with other staff. This reflects some earlier research in the lifelong learning sector (Colley, 2006; Avis *et al*, 2011; Lucas, 2013). As Abigail says, *'I think tomorrow evening (I hope) I'll feel more connected to the students and what I'm teaching and preparing!'* [Abigail, year 1 cohort]. Susie says, *'now I have students who think I am a bitch which I know isn't really anything to do with them learning but I don't want my students to feel that way about me. I think I am going to have quick 5 minute one to ones with this group when I next see them, and talk to them about what they want to*

achieve and try and get rid of this „bitch“ crown that has been thrust upon me.'
[Susie, year 1 cohort].

Students are also positioned in this way as a source of feedback for reflection:

'I'm going to say that I feel I'm learning and improving quicker, or is that more quickly?! Everything I feel isn't or doesn't go well, I change, always getting feedback from the students on what they're clear on, confident in, and what they feel they need more on (as a gauge of how successfully I'm teaching things I haven't before like computer design software!), always reflecting and seeking advice from different people and many sources' [Abigail, year 1 cohort].

Abigail continues to say, *'I feel so attached to the students, I feel such a personal gut wrenching guilt when I could have done anything better and subsequently, I feel I have let them down'* [Abigail, year 1 cohort]. Carina [year 2 cohort] has a more confident and positive view – saying:

'There are definitely some who I am guessing will be chatty, or lack motivation, but they all seem very pleasant. There was one girl who I thought might be a handful - perhaps moody/attitude-y - but my first impressions were wrong. Just before lunch on Monday she randomly said 'I like you, Miss,' and later on when I asked them to do a little writing task, she wrote something about having an 'absolutely lovely teacher.' I know it's really not about whether they like you or not, but it definitely took the edge of my first day in the classroom'

Carina is clear that her teacher identity is in part framed by how her students see her:

'Another thing - although I do feel like my students consider me a real teacher I still really struggle with the fact that students think I am 10 years younger than I am. Just the other day a student predicted my age to be 22. I know I look young because I still get ID'd on a regular basis when buying booze, but I definitely feel a bit paranoid about it. Why do the students think I am young? Is it just because I look young and nothing else? Or is it because they don't think I come across as a 'proper'

teacher. I absolutely don't think I come across as a 22 year old. Do I need to try and alter my teacher persona? This might sound ridiculous to some people but it does my nut in.' [Carina, year 2 cohort].

This is demonstrated when she explains that,

'I had a student complain about me, she didn't like the feedback I gave her (having phone out, being aggressive, not taking instructions = not going through to next stage) and apparently I had something against her personally. So I had to deal with that too, it got sorted but I felt really anxious being new, trying to make a good impression, be professional, not ask too many questions because I don't want to come across as not knowing what to do, but then asking questions to show interest/enthusiasm' [Kim, year 2 cohort].

5.7.3 Validation by others

The notion of entering a community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and obtaining legitimacy within the group is not a common experience across the sample of the novice teachers, but it does occur in some cases. Very early on in her blogging, Laura [year 1 cohort] remarks how others have recognized her practice. This validation becomes a highly meaningful source of professional identity and a resource to draw upon when the challenges of the work begin to be more strongly felt after the first term of employment. As Laura notes in her posts, *'strangely other lecturers are referring to me for advice'* and while *'management currently running around like headless chickens'* nonetheless *'I know my work is respected here, much more in fact than my placement college'*. In some senses, Laura feels as if she is *'given far too much freedom'* but recognises that compared to her colleagues, her practice is sound and productive: *'there are some teachers at my place completely flapping like headless chickens'*. Eventually, two thirds through her first year of employment, Laura notes she *'only felt like a teacher the other day'* and while many of her later posts denote negativity and feeling *'snowed under'* the strong sense of professional identity developed helps her to regain a sense of balance to manage and mitigate that across the organisation as a whole the *'atmosphere here is like a pressure cooker waiting to blow'*. She notes that *'within the*

staffroom I am respected as a professional and always asked for my opinions'. Sennett recognises these challenges and difficulties in modern-day craft professionals to develop skilful practice in the light of capitalist relations at work and the resulting performativity cultures. Sennett uses the example of the UK National Health Service (NHS):

'Here, then, is an emblematic conflict in measures of quality, from which follow two different concepts of institutional craftsmanship. To take a generous view, the reformers of the NHS are crafting a system that works correctly, and their impulse to reform reflects something about all craftsmanship; this is to reject muddling through, to reject the job just good enough, as an excuse for mediocrity' (Sennett; 2008: 51).

Taking the example of Reena [year 1 cohort], she feels she needs further support from those around her to validate her emerging practice:

'I don't know! Although, of course I do know what to do. It's just I would like some reassurance that it is right' [Reena, year 1 cohort]. And, *'I know! I keep doing the same thing of asking people about things. Silly really. But I suddenly feel really responsible for my students results, especially with their first major assessment in 2 weeks. Its really scary and I want reassurance!'*

In these reflections from the novice teachers there are different orientations to, and contexts within which, craft practices are variously easier or harder to mould and identity and agency are complex to establish. Some novice experiences, despite preformed existing communities in employment institutions, point to how '...resistance and ambiguity can be instructive experiences; to work well, every craftsman has to learn from these experiences' (Sennett, 2008: 10).

5.8 Revisiting the research questions

5.8.1 RQ 1

How do novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England perceive the relationship between their professional practices, experiences and emerging teacher identities?

The research suggests that the context of educational and workplace reform in the lifelong learning sector in England allows for a variety of identity practices and as such the possibility of newly formed identities and craft practices are complex and multi-faceted. The complex struggle for identity is a key theme in recent lifelong learning research (Avis, 2009; Orr and Simmons, 2010; 2011; Bathmaker and Avis, 2012; O’Leary, 2015). Following Sennett (2008) craft theorising is used here as an organisational device to present data and to demonstrate what this data means for current debates on the complexities of teacher identity and practice. I recognise that this research is a small-scale collection of individual posts (albeit generated through group-interaction) making-up individual and distinctive personal accounts of the experience of being a novice teacher. Yet, taken as a whole, they potentially point to a wider story: how boundary crossing (Heggen, 2008; Trent, 2013) works across the structure and culture of individual organisations with distinct routines and patterns and through the actions of the individuals that make-up these organisations. The wider story of this research; albeit with a limited sample, is nonetheless a story of how different teachers experience being a novice teacher differently. This lived experience has been understood as a matter of craft – the ethical commitment to ‘doing a job well’ impacting upon how boundary crossing to novice employment is ‘felt’ and understood by those who do it. As Lave and Wenger (1991) have recognized, this practice and identity formation is ‘situated’ within institutional contexts. These individual and small-scale stories are themselves, though, part of a wider story: how the post-Fordist

nature of the lifelong learning landscape in England offers a setting into which teacher action and the outcomes and consequences of actions play-out differently (Coffield, 2015). The existing literature paints a picture of FE teachers subverting and also struggling against performativity and managerial cultures (Petrie, 2015; Daley, 2015; Orr, 2015; Taubman, 2015) in a similar way to the schools sector (Bathmaker and Avis, 2007). In this research, when exploring craft, some novice identities are resilient in the face of initial anxieties and wide-spread neo-liberal performance cultures, but some have a more 'painful beginning' (Huberman, 1989). All identity responses explored here, though, are shaped by socio-context and structural forces enabling (or not) such identities to be constructed. At the same time, some secure craft identities are themselves acts of resistance – rejection of the practice and attitudes of colleagues and of existing communities of practice (Bathmaker and Avis, 2006; Colley, 2010; Cushing, 2012). As such, there are different orientations to boundary-crossing that develop as a result of the interplay of structure and action on the lives of new teachers in the different contexts and settings they find themselves within.

5.8.2 RQ2

To what extent is the concept of 'craft' useful to theorise the professional practices, experiences and identities of novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England?

In contrast to, but building upon, the existing literature's discussions of teacher identity (Avis and Bathmaker, 2004; Avis and Bathmaker, 2006; Wallace, 2002; Jephcote, Salisbury and Rees, 2008) I adopt the use of a different theoretical lens than previous research - the revised use of 'craft' within the work of Sennett (2008). In this way, the research attempts to remove this term from both neo-liberalism (Gove 2010a; 2010b; 2013; Hayes 2010) and also previous positioning by others in the teacher education academic community (Jarvis, 2005; SCETT, 2011; Orchard and Winch, 2015; Philpott, 2015). In using the lens of craft through the writings of Sennett (2008) it is possible to render intelligible the challenges and struggles faced by novice teachers in the lifelong

learning sector when entering new employment settings. The notion of craft as a moral and ethical commitment to perfection and desire towards a 'good job' has enabled the research to explore complex and multiple identity practices from the novice teachers. It is this process of 'beginning', of crossing the boundaries between training (practice, pre-service, student teacher identity) to entering employment, that 'craft' helps to explore. The data demonstrates how the desire to do quality practice can empower some, cause frustration and anxiety for others. It can radicalise (Colley, James and Diment, 2007) and can help novices to struggle against performance-orientated cultures (O'Leary, 2013; 2015). Craft practice can lead some novices to develop confidence and also recognition and validation from existing communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), but for others can lead to withdrawal from colleagues (Avis, Bathmaker and Parsons, 2002; Bathmaker and Avis, 2006; Cushing, 2012) and even 'unbecoming' (Colley *et al*, 2007).

5.8.3 RQ3

How can a digital ethnographic methodological approach enable effective ethnographic research into novice teachers' early professional practice and identity formation in the lifelong learning sector in England?

Digital or virtual ethnography and cyberanthropology are presented as a '...contested terrain for ethnography' (Beaulieu, 2007: 141). For some, they offer '...a specialised form of ethnography' (Kozinets, 2010: 1), or rather, an 'ethnography mediated' (Beaulieu, 2007) since the traditional notions of place and field are 'bridged' or 'filtered' through the medium of the digital platforms and tools chose. This research has explored the usefulness of the adoption of online methods and tools to develop ethnographic research – albeit an ethnography of a different shape and construction to more traditional approaches. The research practices of blogging still retain a commitment to the 'sensibility' of ethnographic inquiry – rich data, 'thick description' and a focus on the exploration of cultural meanings. In adopting the cultural phenomenon of social media (blogs) for this research, I seek to take a digital phenomenon from

cultural practice and reappropriate this practice as a research tool. In doing so, using blogging for this research enables participants to produce cultural text that is then conceived of as qualitative data. Accepting the role of selectivity in 'constructing' and choosing data, the blogging does generate useful data. As Bakardjieva (2009) notes, '...in qualitative social research, our objects are, admittedly and unapologetically, constructed' (2009: 55). Nonetheless, blogging as a research practice in this way does enable the researcher to bring to light novice teachers' views and reflections on and about their experiences. This is the key aim of this method used in this way, since,

'...the task is to investigate some aspect of the lives of the people who are being studied, and this includes finding out how these people view the situations they face, how they regard one another, and also how they see themselves' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 3).

In this research, adopting blogging, the cyberspace or blog used is an 'empty shell' until the online interaction and posting takes place. I have found this technique highly productive notwithstanding the limitations of the data and its 'constructed' nature. At its onset, the origins of digital ethnography posed questions as to the nature of ethnography itself (Murthy, 2008). Yet, '...as ethnography goes digital, its epistemological remit remains much the same. Ethnography is about telling social stories' (Murthy, 2008: 838). The use of blogs as a research tool provides a vehicle through which new teachers' reflections about their lives and performed selves can be 'charted' as they cross into the new spaces and habitual practices of first-time employment. In doing so, this research demonstrates the value online fields can have in positioning relational intimacy (Edwards, 2005; Edwards and Fowler, 2007) as a means to enable individuals and participants in ethnographic research to learn from each other.

The successfulness of the blogging method suggests that blogging within a second-order ethnographic field, notwithstanding the complexities of presence,

self and voice in interactions and in making sense of the data and stories developed, allows the generation of data rooted in participants' own understandings of their social practices as new teachers. While I as ethnographer question around the edges, and ask at times difficult and searching questions, nonetheless, participants' stories come out in the interplay between the postings of the various members of the blog. The novice teachers' reflections are positioned as a truth in themselves. I question this truth, and question them on their posts. I also allow their own words to tell stories and to support each other. In turn, I seek from participants their own understandings of the stories being generated by the blogging overtime. Within all this, I remain at a distance, and yet fully involved. I can apply an ethnographic sceptical lens to what participants say in this online second-order field, about their off-line first-order *lebenswelt* [meaningful lived worlds] and yet this research is also based upon the principles of trust, openness and honesty. I reconcile this potential 'disturbing' of the world, by adopting an 'epistemology of doing' as a research practice (as explored in research question 4 below).

The adoption of blogs and online qualitative methods in general is though perhaps not unsurprising, given that much social research can be seen as a history of engagement with, and adoption of, the technologies of the time. Perhaps what is surprising is the lack of research using blogs as a method for data collection within the field of education. Without adopting a technological-determinist argument, social research can be conceived as having to 'accommodate' or 'reject' the popular and accessible technology available: from the early use of photography in visual anthropology and the use of cinema/moving image in anthropology and ethnography; the gradual and eventual adoption of mapping tools by sociologists at Chicago University (Park and Burgess, 1921); Howard Becker's rejection of photography in ethnography but early adoption of magnetic-tape recording equipment (Becker, 1974); to the current relatively wide-spread available computer software programmes which allow the codification of qualitative data. This is a history of research fundamentally bound up with technology and technological tools.

Although blogging produced very quickly large textual materials, work is involved here in rendering the data ready to be queried through the lens of theory. Following Seale (1999) the 'quality' of my data handling, coding and theorising practices (*what I 'do'*) lies in both its systematic endeavour and the openness I have, as a researcher, about the processes and procedures undertaken. 'Results' as opposed to 'data' in the raw form is a matter of construction (Geertz, 1973). While quantitative methods select prior to data collection (choice of questioning schedules, the design of questionnaires), ethnographic data is selective through interactional processes involved with participants and through after-the-fact coding. This means that data is always a construction. As Geertz notes,

'...if you want to understand what a science is, you should look in the first instance not at its theories or its findings, and certainly not at what its apologists say about it; you should look at what the practitioners of it do' (1973: 5).

I therefore place a strong emphasis upon the coding practices that underpin the presentation of the results (See *Appendix M*). Coding imposes a transparency and systematic regime on what would otherwise be a 'mass' of data.

5.8.4 RQ4

To what extent can online asynchronous blogging practices support the development of professional practices by novice teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England?

The use of blogs and *wikis* are both boundary-less as they allow for asynchronous communication and interaction, and at the same time they require a presence and a spatiality since to interact users need nonetheless to post, to log-on, to view and to interact. Previous research notes the potential usefulness of online tools to support teacher learning (Harlen and Doubler,

2004). In this thesis I attempt to think about virtual worlds as not so much communities of practice but rather as relational spaces based upon the drawing of boundaries to hold mutual common interests. They are spaces of self-authoring. Users of such spaces use, and in doing so legitimise, tacit knowledge and lived experience. As a form of mutual support, the participants in this ethnographic research engage in reflective and reflexive practices that resemble relational intimacy (Edwards and Mackenzie, 2005; Edwards, 2005). The craft lens is again useful here when discussing professional learning and professional socialisation: Seeing pedagogic practice as a craft-choice, and, in turn, seeing choices around teachers' craft practices and pedagogies as an issue of identity, draws upon the notion of 'artistic connoisseurship' (Eisner, 1979):

'Through reflection teachers apply the process of artistic connoisseurship to their own practice to judge its worth, and over time deepen their level of understanding of the quality and productive power of their interactions with students. Innovations in pedagogy and learning disturb the continuity of this process, bringing with them, usually from outside, a vision that challenges the teacher to change' (Somekh, 2007: 2).

In the case of this research, the use of blogging has similarities to an online/e-moderated focus group or joint interview in the sense that participants are able to see (rather than hear) the views of others (Stewart and Williams, 2005). There are already a number of examples of the use of focus groups and interviews in an online form (O'Connor and Madge, 2001; Williams and Robson, 2003; Beck, 2005). However, the use of blogging as a multi-authored and co-constructed practice over time has significance for professional learning much greater than a one-off online focus group. Over time, relationships develop, trust is established, participants share and communicate and collectively make-sense of experience. They support one another in this process. The joint involvement of others on the one hand allows the establishment of community and shared understanding. On the other, it means that – as with focus groups – participants can be directed and swayed by those around them. I made the choice in this research that the need for openness, transparency and shared conversation outweigh the implications of the shared responses.

5.9 Conclusion

In this (digital) ethnographic inquiry there is variety in the extent to which new entrants into the teaching profession are able to carve out and negotiate futures and identities for themselves (Avis *et al*, 2002; Avis, 2002), and variety in the outcomes and actions that result. Albeit with a small sample, boundary-crossing practices are conceived as complex and can vary according to organisational culture and structural processes (Coffield, 2015). In this sense, identities are also multiple (Orr, 2009). In this research, the nexus between self, training experiences, new institutional norms and community practices form the basis for the craft identities novice teachers try to construct. Yet, depending upon the circumstances of the context, some novice teachers find it more problematic than others to develop appropriate and useful resilient identities. To explain this the lens of a craft approach has been applied to the textual stories created through the blogging associated with this research.

Chapter 6 Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

In this final chapter, attention is given to discussion of the successes and limitations of the study and in doing so to position the work within wider professional practices. I acknowledge that I write this thesis as a teacher educator and this professional location contextualises my orientation to the research: In order to best educate and train practitioners in this sector I believe it is vital that teacher educators better understand the challenges, opportunities and practices novice teachers experience when entering first-time employment. I see this in part a question of community – of building and sustaining opportunities for professionals to talk: hence framing this research as an ‘epistemology of doing’. Given this, while I therefore recognise the co-constructed nature of my data, I value the community and reciprocal relationships around which this data was developed. I tread this ambiguous line with care, and this presents challenges, opportunities and limitations in the research that I shall now conclude by exploring.

6.2 Overview of the thesis

The results of this thesis demonstrate the applicability of the Sennettian craft theoretical lens to explore the experiences of novice teachers. While building upon the insights of the previous literature, this also positions this thesis distinct from the lenses adopted by previous commentators. This fulfils the need for a ‘complex understanding’ of boundary crossing, as previously identified by Colley, James and Diment (2007). To review the thesis, I shall consider each chapter in turn.

Chapter two, Literature Review: While building upon the insights of the existing literature I have argued that existing research develops theoretical understandings within mainly socio-cultural, policy economy and post-structural

lenses. In this, there has been a space to review teacher identity in the lifelong learning sector through another lens – that of the sociological writings of Sennett (2008). The idea that craft is not just a matter of making is a position embraced by Sennett (2008) but ignored by neo-liberal definitions of craft and also absent from the subsequent teacher education response. In applying craft as a useful conceptual frame to render these ideas applicable to the modern lifelong learning context in England, this is a process of both building on what has come before, while recognising its limitations. This thesis points towards the claim that a craft lens has been a previously missed opportunity for theorising for this sector. The lens of ‘craft’ points to a useful theoretical frame to understand novice teachers’ experiences, and to think about their identity, practice and relationships with others. It is important for this argument to recognise that notwithstanding the ‘unsettling boundaries’ in and around the lifelong learning sector itself (Edwards and Fowler, 2007), conceptualisations of ‘craft’ of teachers in the lifelong learning sector are contested and enacted by the professionals who ‘profess’ to practice them as much as they are constructed as a ‘subject’ in policy narratives.

Chapter three, Theorizing ‘Craft’: In this chapter, and while indebted to the existing literature which makes strong connections between the sector and ethical practice/social justice (both in policy rhetoric and also in the aspirations and practices of the workforce (Avis, 2016)), I ask, what role does ethical craft practice play in reframing how we think about teacher practice and identity? This positions the thesis in a conceptual gap, exploring the sector through the lens of a refined and reconciled craft perspective. The results of this thesis address this conceptual gap, and demonstrate the appropriateness of Sennettian-based use of craft as a means to think about the identity and practice of novice teachers. It provides the means to think about practice as an ethical act, and quality as a desire to do a good job separate from performativity cultures and the dominance of neo-liberal codification and surveillance of ‘quality’ present though post-Fordist regimes and managerial cultures.

Chapter four, Methodology and Method: This thesis has explored the role of blogging as a research methodology in order to develop the alternative

conceptual frame of 'craft'. This research is informed by an epistemological sensibility which both values and privileges the importance of insider perspectives and the 'following' of individuals as they participate in cultural groups with the view to producing 'thick' data. For some, virtual ethnographers have 'fetishized' notions of community when extending too far the on-line/off-line, real/virtual distinction (Wilson and Peterson, 2002; Beaulieu, 2007). Following Escobar (1994), the ethnographic project remains, regardless of how the field exists - virtual or 'real', lived or cyber. The importance of ethnography remains since the conceptual frameworks themselves remain (and remain important). As I demonstrate in this research, it is still possible to explore notions of society, self, and culture whether the sociality under the ethnographic gaze is virtual or 'real'.

One measurement of the success of the relations in the online space is the very amount of posts, interactions, comments, and reposts that the participants engaged in. This ends up amassing a huge volume of text to be '*figured out*' by the group and to then be subsequently coded. Data-overload is not however, a distinctive feature of virtual or digital methods, but of potentially all ethnographic inquiry. Data-overload is but the other side of 'thick description'. This is not exclusively an issue of virtual ethnography; it is not an online overload but a consequence of immersion. This means that selectivity is also built-in to the ethnographic sensibility.

Chapter five, Findings: In this chapter I develop through the Sennettian craft theoretical lens an exploration of Danielewicz's contention that identities co-exist within a multitude of other identities and selves; that the variety of 'selves' on offer to each professional-in-training exist fluidly, with varying degrees of relevance depending upon the context and temporal location.

My key challenge was *how to frame those things worth having conversations about?* This is the real value of 'being there' - the ability to engage and interact. In using online methods and in having a virtual presence there is a 'real' danger of participants being lost and disembodied. But in sensitively interacting,

supporting, and at times (appropriately) coaxing, issues of '*being here, being there, and being everywhere*' can be overcome. The co-presence in online spaces between social actors and other actors and between the researcher and actors can be maintained in both synchronous and asynchronous ways. This is both a methodological convenience and also a potentially distinctive feature of the ontology of these locations. 'Being there' might not mean 'being there together, at the same time'. This in turn has implications for the constructing and recording of field notes. As an online researcher with a virtual immersion of sorts, I nonetheless had the luxury of being able to make field notes separate from immersion and presence. This makes it more significant to involve the social actors themselves in the authenticating of meaning, in creating epistemologies of doing. To then 'frame' those things 'worth' talking about I was both equally guided by the posts made by the novice teachers themselves and through being sensitized by my reading of the literature.

For the participants here, over time, there is recognition as the academic/teaching year progresses of change. This change manifests itself in classroom persona and for a few of the sample where structural and cultural conditions in organisations allow, also in systematic attempts to 'become' the sort of teacher that they wish to be. Establishing a teacher identity is seen to not come quickly or easily to most of the sample. The data produced through this ethnographic inquiry demonstrates that beginning as a teacher, and beginning to become an experienced rather than a novice teacher, is a complex act of boundary-crossing which is informed by, and contextualised by, the relational and organisational structures around first-entrants into the profession. This has been presented as a matter of 'craft'. As a teacher educator, this research provides opportunities to explore how trainees accommodate leaving the boundaries of pre-service ITE programmes with the new boundaries they cross into - the hyper-fluid and post-Fordist world of teaching in the lifelong learning sector in England.

6.3 Limitations

In locating the research within Seale's (1999) notions of the 'quality' of qualitative research, it is possible to identify some limitations and wider issues of methodological significance to consider here. The research, by its nature, has limitations regarding sample size; it is small-scale and was always intended to be. This was a decision made in part due to the desire to obtain open and reflective contributions from a small group who could communicate together and in part due to experience using online platforms in other aspects of my professional life (teaching) and having a belief that larger than 5-7 participants would become difficult to manage. The sample is both opportunistic but is also an example of theoretical sampling (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990) – the deliberate choice to engage with participants to ensure the ability for the research to test specific ideas. The participants also self-select as familiarity with 'blogging' was made very clear from the start and I suspect it likely that many novice teachers did not wish to participate due the nature of this data capture. These issues of smallness of scale and of the self-selected and opportunistic nature of the sampling are relatively inherent in small qualitative research, which by its nature is always a socially constructed endeavour (Sayer, 1992; Reichardt and Rallis, 1994). However, in conducting this research I have also been aware of my own researcher dispositions in shaping how I approach the act of research and processes of data gathering and coding. I also recognise, though, that in some senses this is not new – it is an old qualitative problem. Adopting Geertz (1973) to demonstrate this, ethnographic data is '...really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to' (Geertz 1973: 9).

In thinking about the 'constructions of constructions', and to discuss the limitations of this research further, I will explore the four themes of: *authenticity*, *truth*, *presence* and *field*.

6.3.1 Authenticity?

To what extent is the text produced in the second-order 'real' and authentic and to what extent does it speak to the first-order lived experience?

As a researcher, I am deeply involved in the creation of these textual practices: I set up the 'empty shell' blog (the 'second-order field'), the online space, into which action and interaction between the participants and myself takes place. I occupy multiple positions within both the research, the relationship to the participants and to the creation of the data. As an ethnographer acting within a field, I have a 'presence' (albeit asynchronous, disembodied and virtual in this case) and part of this presence is to 'poke' and question. I ask difficult questions of lay-actors but in sensitive ways. These difficult questions are already informed by the reading of the literature and awareness of this cannot be separated from the construction of the data at the point of participation. Whether the method is a blog, participant observation or an interview, these links between data generation and researcher presence, informed by literature, are the same. It is also important to recognise the second-order nature of these textual practices. In the online form, the text generated by the participants refers to another, offline world in the 'actual' – the employment locations the novice teachers have entered for their first-time employment social practices. Hermeneutically, this data drawn from the action of blogging is a social practice in its own right and refers to another first-order site of social practices and multiple relations. As previously noted by Mann and Stewart (2000), '...(W)hen data are collected online, much of this contextual materials is missing. In the mainly black and white world of text we lose the Technicolor of lived life and its impact on most of our senses' (Mann and Stewart, 2000: 197). Relying on text however, means there is the need to 'put the Technicolor back'. It is possible to do this by engaging with social actors in virtual fields in much the same way as I might in face-to-face lived life: asking questions, seeking clarifications, engaging with dialogue where we co-construct the meanings of the cultural and textual practices themselves. In this research, I question and recognise the problems of the 'authenticity' of reported lived experience if not seeing it first hand, and yet, what might be seen first-hand and what it means are not always

obvious – hence the need for ethnographic inquiry in the first place. As Horn (1998) notes, ‘...(W)e are as often fooled by appearances as we are informed by them’ (Horn, 1998: 91). What I am conscious to do then, in ‘putting the Technicolor back’ is to engage social actors as co-constructors of the textual practices in the hypermedia I adopt with them. Alternatively, I can conceive of this as not so much putting back the richness but rather, accepting hypermedia and mediated text as offering its own richness. In this case a richness born out of multiple authors working on text collectively. This is, again, what I would consider to be an ‘epistemology of doing’ (Rybas and Gajjala, 2007). What comes through this process is the usefulness of the notion of craft in the writing of Sennett (2008) to help explain the stories the data presents. As an ethnographer I can, of course, be ‘fooled by appearances’ (Horn, 1998). Yet my role is to trust, while making ‘meaningful’ the contributions of others with whom I will always be an outsider.

6.3.2 Truth?

To what extent can the data and coding be relied upon to truly represent the views of, and experiences of, the novice teachers?

In conducting this research I have been clear that the use of the coding processes helps to ‘put the Technicolor back’ which is otherwise lost from the text that is generated when separated from the interactive and reflective blogging processes (Mann and Stewart, 2000). This comes down to a matter of truth – to what extent can I rely upon the reportage and reflection of the participants and to what extent can I rely on my own coding processes? It is therefore also, drawing upon Seale (1999) a matter of the ‘*fallibilistic*’ approach to qualitative research. It is highly labour intensive, but essential that adequate and systematic coding practices are developed (Layder, 1998; Charmaz, 2006). However, despite these multiple layers of subjectivity, the researcher role is to see clues towards themes and theoretical concerns. As Polanyi (1958) notes when discussing the construction of knowledge,

‘...clues and tools are things used as such and not observed in themselves’ (Polanyi, 1958: vii), And, ‘...such knowing is indeed objective in the sense of establishing contact with a hidden reality; a

contact that is defined as the condition for anticipating an indeterminate range of yet unknown (and perhaps yet inconceivable) true implications' (Polanyi, 1958: viii).

All the researcher can do is to present findings, confident in the coding to point to the theoretical lens (in this case of craft) while recognising with some wariness the subjectivity involved. Yet ethically it is important to trust the reportage of the participants given the moral commitment this research practice has towards an 'epistemology of doing'. This is nonetheless highly subjective, as Polanyi has noted, '...personal knowledge is an intellectual commitment, and as such inherently hazardous' (1958: vii). It is possible to mitigate the hazardous, yet also recognise that in this research I am nonetheless an ethnographic outsider – offering a privileged glimpse at personal stories (that would otherwise go untold) and also that distance both brings the lens of the literature more sharply into focus while at the same time distancing my relationship with the authors of those stories and the practices these stories recount.

6.3.3 Presence?

What was the nature of my presence in this research and how does this affect the data generated?

As Hammersley and Atkinson identify, drawing together hard to reach social actors or uniting actors across space and time in synchronous or asynchronous ways means that ethnographic research

'...does not necessarily study 'naturally occurring' communities that exist in cyberspace, although in the course of setting up noticeboards and chat rooms researchers can create temporary, research-situated groupings' (2007: 138).

In reflecting upon this distinction, it is possible to draw a difference between cyberspaces and cultures which exist prior to the activity of the ethnographer, which are 'naturally occurring', and in this research, the construction of a cyberspace for the express purposes of methodological and ethnographic

inquiry. Participants do nonetheless inhabit this field, but it is a meta- or second-order ethnographic field - a space where commentary is provided and selves are worked-on with reference to another, primary field, where habitual relations are maintained and selves are enacted 'for real' with the colleagues the teachers work alongside in 'lived experience'. As the ethnographer, there is still a presence in the field, but the field is second-order. Such ethnographic practice is still an experiential form of constructing knowledge (Hine, 2000). It is the case, as Wittel (2000) notes, that by drawing boundaries the ethnographer constructs the spaces of the field in question. 'Following' (having presence and interacting and questioning) creates the 'thick description' held as essential for ethnographic inquiry. But in following the researcher draws temporal and spatial significance to the boundaries worked within.

It is argued that, '...by definition online ethnography describes places that are not spaces' (Rutter and Smith, 2005: 84). My choice, to draw upon an on-line place to investigate novice teacher's practices in an off-line space, questions notions of field and presence in the field. In my ethnography (given the diverse geographical location of the sample who I wanted to be able to be in contact with each other), as in other examples of a digital ethnographic method, '...there is no obvious place to 'go' to carry out fieldwork' (Rutter and Smith, 2005: 84). Yet, it is still possible to undertake an ethnography but through asynchronous means. This is further compounded since '...(D)isembodied persons people these places' (Rutter and Smith, 2005: 84). In this sense, the field for (digital) ethnographic research is (and becomes further) distinctive and of primary concern since the disembodiment of participants brings with it new attempts to share cultures which are '...defined only by acts of interaction and communication. There is no 'place' in the virtual beyond the metaphor. For the virtual ethnographer this repositions the notion of place or setting from geographical zone to assemblage of forms of conduct' (Rutter and Smith, 2005: 85).

Through the experience of this research, on reflection, I suggest that previous research has been guilty of overstating the newness and distinctiveness of cyberplaces. For example,

‘...(T)he design of cyberspace is, after all, the design of another life-world, a parallel universe, offering the intoxicating prospect of actually fulfilling — with a technology very nearly achieved — a dream thousands of years old: the dream of transcending the physical world, fully alive, at will, to dwell in some Beyond — to be empowered or enlightened there, alone or with others, and to return’ (Benedikt, 1991: 131).

I question these and other such claims as overstated. For example: ‘(t)hese experiences are not part of another life-world located in some parallel universe outside of the body. These experiences are simply another part of real life’ (Markam, 1998: 163). In terms of the research herein, the on-line world created through participation and interaction (through blogging and posting between and with the novice teachers) is a community of sorts, albeit disenfranchised and disembodied from the otherworld social practices the participants comment upon. As has been previously defined, ‘...a community is not fixed in form or function, it is a mixed bag of possible options whose meanings and concreteness are always being negotiated by individuals, in the context of changing external constraints’ (Komito, 1998: 105). Following Komito, I argue that this is true for research within the qualitative paradigm in general, regardless of whether the method is online or face-to-face.

In the case of this research, participants are the co-constructors of their own *folksonomies* [lay-actor sense making through cultural text] giving meaning and validation to each other’s’ reflections and actively (re)forming cultural practices anew. Recognition is given to the idea that this field does have differences to that of a ‘lived’ one since the use of hypermedia privileges and prioritises the textual practices themselves, in the absence of other practices and evidences. In the world of the *blogosphere* (Hookway, 2008), the culturally produced text is *all*, alongside the meanings attributed to it. To accommodate this challenge, as with any ethnographic practice, I have been conscious to ask questions, interact, and to seek clarifications: To develop contextualisation around the data presented. In this way, as with much qualitative research, I find myself as a researcher *on the cusp* between on the one hand, giving priority to and valuing the subjective responses of the participants, and on the other asking questions,

probing meaning, being sceptical and seeking to locate the data within literature through a coding process based upon adaptive theorizing.

6.3.4 *Field?*

To what extent is the use of blogs in this way really an ethnographic field?

Dominguez *et al* (2007) suggest, ‘...virtual ethnographers, ethnographers of the Internet or of cyberspace are faced with the need to answer very pressing questions’ (Dominguez *et al*, 2007), which locate new ethnographic methodological practices within existing debates. The key question to be posed at the end of this research, on hindsight, is do cyberplaces and the use of hypermedia constitute a field at all? Following Schwandt (1997: 51) I define field as ‘...a place or situation where some particular social action transpires whether or not the enquirer is present’. Field can be conceived as,

‘...the physical and cultural site where language takes place. Thus, field is both a physical locality with material objects, and the social processes and activities within which language is embedded’ (Mann and Stewart, 2000: 195).

This research constructed a hypermediated place for the purposes of this research and in doing so potentially questions naturalistic notions of field and community. However, problematizing field and community are already established theoretical, conceptual and epistemological issues in much recent ethnography and cultural anthropology. As noted by Faubion, ‘...if previously, culture was the fieldworker’s question, it has increasingly become his, or hers, to put into question’ (2001: 39). I argue that the debates remain the same, regardless of the introduction of (new) technologies of space and place ‘distanciation’ (Giddens, 1990). Fieldwork is nebulous and operates within fuzzy boundaries: ‘...fieldwork has an increasingly unstable object, or if not even quite that, an increasingly indefinite plurality of objects’ (Faubion, 2001: 39). To use Geertz (1973), I argue that field is ‘located’ in the cultural practices built by groups – practices themselves that are textual.

6.4 Future research

The methodological and theoretical concern here is to open-up stories and let novice teachers be heard. This is a key motivation for this research, and it is these stories that then will inform my future practice as a teacher educator. Understanding novice teachers' lives enable the framing of my pedagogy as a teacher educator to '*insist upon identity*' (Danielewicz, 2001) as part of my practice and intentionality (Kosnik, 2007). In order to develop data that is conceptually useful and also professionally useful for my teacher education role, the research needs to unpack the lived experiences of novice teachers.

Within this digital ethnographic approach, using blogs and the relational and textual practices they create, '...it is preferable to ask questions that open up topics and allow respondents to construct answers, in collaboration with listeners, in the ways they find meaningful' (Riessman, 2011: 201). As a digital ethnographer dealing with blogs, like any ethnographer dealing with the richness of human social and cultural practices, it is required that the researcher '...strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong' (Geertz, 1973: 452). While undertaking this work in the context of the lifelong learning sector, I am conscious of the need now to explore these craft understandings from Sennett (2008) across other sectors. The literature of the lifelong learning sector often positions the sector as fundamentally different from the schools sector in England (Gleeson *et al*, 2005; Avis *et al*, 2011; Busher, James and Piela, 2015). To what extent might the sector change novice teachers' experiences, their sense making of these experiences and their notions of 'craft'? Conscious of the development of the 'Schools Direct' model in English schools (McNamara and Murray, 2013) and the positioning of novice teachers in potentially 'technicist terms' (Brown, Rowley and Smith, 2015), it would be of interest to now explore notions of craft from Sennett (2008) in this new and significant provision.

Taking the research in a related but different direction, I would be interested in the extent that craft in the Sennettian sense, as an ethical commitment to the

quality in, and pleasure derived from, practice, might be applied to not just novice teachers but to teacher educators. It would be interesting within this theoretical framework to explore how novice teacher educators construct a sense of their craft and experience. Given claims in the literature of the 'uniqueness' of the lifelong learning sector in England (Lucas, 2013; Avis, 2016; Busher, James and Piela, 2015), I would be interested in the use of craft to explore the practices of teacher educators for this sector, especially during the changing times of recent policy outcomes which see the removal of the formal 'need' for teachers in this sector to be qualified. I wonder if the adoption of online spaces and blogging would work in the same way for this group of teacher educators as it did for the novice teachers themselves?

To continue to explore the use of online tools within a qualitative paradigm might also enable future research to cross even further boundaries of time and space. For example, alongside the later stages of this research I have had the opportunity to become involved in a large cross-European project exploring the professional development needs of teacher educators. This project, The International Forum for Teacher Educator Development (InFo-TED)⁶, has led to many opportunities to lead European conference papers and to explore the use of social media to support the organisation. Through this platform, and the research interests that inform the group, a cross-European exploration of the use of craft to explain the work of teacher educators, and their future development needs, would be a useful and interesting contribution coming out of the work of this thesis. It would also be of value, given the current 'turn to the practical' of school and college-based teacher education (Furlong and Lawn, 2011), to compare the 'craft' of university-based teacher educators with schools-based and college-based teacher educators.

⁶ The work of InFo-TED is currently documented here:

<https://www.ntnu.edu/info-ted> [last accessed October, 2016]

6.5 Implications for personal professional practice

I started this thesis with the initial question, borrowed from Danielewicz (2001) - '*how do students become teachers?*' Taken as a whole, this data suggests how context, institutional cultures, relationships and feelings of autonomy and powerlessness affect stable and fragile craft identities. In this sense, being or becoming a teacher changes selves, but such change constructs roles and identities that can be 'tapped' into as required. This collection of identities, '*...are under construction as they are reformed, added to, eroded, reconstructed, integrated, dissolved or expanded*' (Danielewicz, 2001: 4). In other words, '*...becoming a teacher means that an individual must adopt an identity as such*' (Danielewicz, 2001: 9). In this regard, learning to teach is not simply a matter of tacit knowledge or technical know-how and for Danielewicz the implications of this is that teacher educators must be always '*...insisting on identity*' (Danielewicz, 2001: 9).

Through the process of this research I feel I am at a point where I can understand the implications of 'insisting upon identity' for my own pedagogy. This would mean in turn, insisting on my own identity, and the pedagogy that goes alongside this (Murray, Czerniawski and Barber, 2011). When I first boundary-crossed into ITE in higher education from my previous role working in the lifelong learning sector I had, on reflection, a very under-realised pedagogy. I am reminded once more of Kosnik's statement that teacher education is '*...still the same yet different*' (2007: 18) and in acting as a second-order professional (Murray, 2002) it is key to make the '*...intentionality about making the thinking behind my teaching visible*' (Kosnik, 2007: 18). Moving on from the 'naïve practitioner' (Kane, 2007) and in rethinking my pedagogy, I can see the need to more formally engage with trainee teachers' identity practices (before they are employed as 'novice practitioners'). To set-aside time to explore with them their on-going and emerging identity constructions, and to also explore what this 'insistence on identity' might mean for supporting the writing practices of trainee teachers. In this way I seek to further develop my pedagogy as a teacher educator (McKeon and Harrison, 2010). I have begun to articulate with trainee

teachers how academic writing can support their identity development as a process of 'knowing, doing and becoming'. This has been useful in also helping to talk to trainees about the intentionality behind their practice.

In the later stages of this thesis, after data collection, my own professional location has significantly changed. Due to some aspects of the changing sector context explored in the thesis, the university has removed its PCET teacher training. I retain a strong ethical, professional and personal commitment to this sector and continue this, albeit in a now limited way, by supporting local collaborative partners who provide validated PCET programmes. The thesis greatly informs this work, but also informs the work I now undertake within secondary ITE and in running the university's Professional Standards Framework (PSF): the thesis provides a basis to reflect upon the process of 'becoming', of boundary-crossing, and what this means for the effective support of new entrants into the profession regardless of the sector they teach in.

In supporting these diverse professional learners, I am conscious of the 'peripheralities' involved (Vigurs, 2016). The issue of being on the periphery has also been central in the methodological practices in this research and the use of, and commitment to, social media that have developed in my research practice⁷. In this way social media offered an opportunity to bridge boundaries and work with those not present face-to-face.

⁷ This interest in and commitment to the use of technology and social media to support teachers' professional learning, informed by interests developed through the writing of the thesis has culminated in the joint editing of a Guest/Special Issue of the journal *Professional Development in Education* (PDiE): Murray, J, and Kidd, W. (eds.) (2013) Using Emerging Technologies to Develop Professional Learning (Special Edition), *Professional Development in Education*, 39 (2).

The commitment to bridging space using social media mirrors a similar commitment in my teaching – the use of social media (*Twitter* and *Blogger*) to facilitate podcasting that supports the professional craft and identity practices of a diverse range of teachers and colleagues⁸.

In this way the use of social media provides an opportunity to ‘reach out’ and ‘draw in’ professional learners who might otherwise be on the periphery (Vigurs, 2016) in both research and teaching practices. Although these are developments in my teaching, they coexist in my professional practice in parallel with this thesis.

Finally, on reflecting upon the role of the thesis in my own professional learning, I am reminded of Atkinson (1998) in discussing interpretative methods. Atkinson argues that qualitative research methods enable the ‘...gathering information on the subjective essence of one person’s entire life’ (1998: 5). He also suggests that,

‘I have felt that it is important in trying to understand others’ positions in life, or description of themselves and their relation to others, to let their voices be heard, to let them speak for and about themselves first. If we want to know the unique experience and perspective of an individual, there is no better way than to get this than in the person’s own voice’ (1998: 5).

I have sought to do the same here, limitations withstanding. I have grounded my research in the individualised and personalised stories of teachers working in a sector I have once also been very familiar with. Yet, in the ethnographic

⁸ This work on using podcasting to support professional learning, professional craft and identity was most recently showcased at an invited keynote for the ‘Active in Languages, Interactive in Teaching’ conference held September 2015 in Wroclaw, Poland.

Available here: <http://podcampus.phwien.ac.at/zli/archives/2039> [last accessed October, 2016].

'pokes' and 'prods' of the research practice I recognise the change the lifelong learning sector is undergoing through the eyes and stories of the participants themselves. I value that they have allowed this glimpse into their craft practice.

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Appendices

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Appendix A

Consent form for participants



Consent to Participate in a Research Programme

Involving the Use of Human Participants

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

“Tinkering with the tools of our trade: An account of changing choices and emerging professional identities amongst Newly Qualified Teachers in the post-compulsory sector, using emergent technology for reflective practice.”

- I have read the information leaflet relating to the above programme of research in which I have been asked to participate and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purposes of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what is being proposed and the procedures in which I will be involved have been explained to me.
- I understand that my involvement in this study, and particular data from this research, will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher involved in the study will have access to the data. It has been

explained to me what will happen to the data once the research programme has been completed.

- I understand that my posts to the blog webspace that this research seeks to use will be viewed by other participants and that my identity to them will be known, as theirs will be to me.
- I agree to keep the password and access to the secure blog webspace private and secret from third parties.
- I hereby fully and freely consent to participate in the study which has been fully explained to me.
- I have read, understood and have agreed to the conditions as described in the accompanying *Information Form for Participants*.
- Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the programme at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason.
- I give permission for audio, video and written quotation of the interviews and blog posts to be used by the named researcher below for publication, teaching and for conference presentations.

Participant's name (BLOCK CAPITALS).....

Participant's signature:
.....
.....

Investigator's name: Warren Kidd, Senior Lecturer, University of East London (UEL)

Investigator's signature:Date:

Appendix B

Information for participants (prior to giving consent to participation)



Research Information for Participants

Title:

“Tinkering with the tools of our trade: An account of changing choices and emerging professional identities amongst Newly Qualified Teachers in the post-compulsory sector, using emergent technology for reflective practice.”

Context:

I am Senior Lecturer at the Cass School of Education and Communities, University of East London where I am a Teaching Fellow and the School’s Leader in Learning and Teaching. My duties include teaching, training teachers and research work. My research background is within sociology. I am looking for a sample of ex-PGCE PCET trainees to take part in the final year of my Doctoral research. The involvement would be for just under one self-contained academic year. I’m looking for between 5 - 7 people who fit the following profile:

- Ex-UEL PGCE trainees

- Have employment in the lifelong learning sector (including schools)
- Are starting a new professional carrier (I.e. were pre-service when training)

My research involves tracking and supporting new entrants into the profession, via the means of a reflective blog and occasional face to face interviews. I am wanting to chart the experiences that new entrants face - their hopes, fears, anxieties and successes with a view to seeing how new teachers form their sense of professional identity. My initial research question can be formed as: What constructs the classroom choices made by PCET newly qualified practitioners and what does this tell us about their emerging and changing professional identities?

To do research this I have sought and received ethical approval from within the university and as part of this I will be guaranteeing to, and requesting from, potential participants the following:

- As with all ethical research, you would have the right to not take part if it does not interest you;
- You would also have the right to withdraw at any time;
- Your identity would be protected - I would not disclose who you are and where you worked. However, it is important that you realise that the other participants would know who you were - and you them. This is so that our conversations on the blog – while virtual – have an authenticity and that there is a genuine sense of a mutual peer group that can develop through our interactions with one another.

The way the research would work is that if you were interested in taking part a number of things would happen:

- I would provide you (in mid August, 2011) with secure access to a blog that can only be viewed by myself and by the other members of the research - the other 5 - 6 ex trainees as part of the sample.
- I would request that you undertake a commitment to try where possible to post comments on the blog every two weeks or so through your NQT year detailing your experiences. You would be able to read each other's experiences too.
- I would use these comments posted by yourself (you are free to post more than the above suggested amount) to make decisions and judgements about what works and doesn't work about the support we offer on the PGCE programme you studied, and also to structure interviews with you when I saw you - hopefully every term.
- You would as a result of this hopefully get access to some useful support: you would have me as a point of contact to share views and ideas, decisions and difficulties. You would also learn from the experiences of each other - and would be welcomed (but not obliged) to reply to each other's posts as you saw fit. I also think that by having access to each other's experiences this might provide you with a larger community of support.

The genesis for the research emerges from my own experience in action research in previous posts. I am interested in the choices teachers make and their reasons for doing so. In working with peers in previous jobs mentoring and also coaching I find myself reflecting upon the levels of awareness practitioners have over their own practice and how they construct their own repertoire of ideas, techniques and approaches. A metaphor helps here: I imagine all teachers, as they step into the classroom, to carry with them an imaginary bag of possible approaches they could draw upon – a toolkit. I am interested in the processes that shape where this toolkit comes from, and what elements it is constructed from.

Questions -

How do we construct our teaching toolkit?

How do new teaching professionals make choices over the craft/practice?

How does our toolkit change over time?

What reflexive processes might we go through as a new professional in renewing our toolkit?

How do NQTs in the PCET sector develop, organise and evaluate their 'stock-of-knowledge at hand'?

How do NQT staff entering FE/PCET sector manage and maintain this toolkit?

How do they refresh it from time to time?

How does it evolve in their first year of teaching?

To reform the research question once more: How do NQT FE practitioners 'navigate' the construction of their toolkit and how do they 'navigate' their professionalism? What effect does one have upon the other? It would be interesting to explore the transitions NQTs make in their classroom practice - in terms of how over time, they build/fill-up/tidy-up/disregard their imaginary professional 'toolkit' of classroom craft.

Notes:

The posting commitment on the communal blog would be once per fortnight as a guide. Participants are free to do more or less than this although significantly less might result in the researcher and participant negotiating a close to participation.

It is important that all participants understand that some quotations from this research will be made available to trainee teachers studying at University of East London (UEL), and used with them in teaching sessions to better improve their own teaching.

The data would also be used to enable the PCET team to reflect upon and evaluate their own provision in light of how the programme does or does not best enable NQTs to successfully develop after leaving the programme. However, it is important to recognise that only Warren Kidd as the sole researcher for this project would have complete access to the data and to the identities of the sample beyond the virtual community of participants itself.

I would use written quotes from the blogging (anonymously) for future presentations and articles if appropriate and relevant

Important

All participants will know the identities of each other taking part with a view that this would enable us to build a mutual community of support.

Where possible and reasonable, all identities of participants will be anonymous beyond that of the virtual community.

No names of other teachers will be discussed

No names of schools/colleges will be discussed

The research would last for a complete academic year, although participants have the right to withdraw at any time.

- Participants would need to sign a release before they take part, showing that they understand fully the point of the research and the use of the data. In signing their consent to participate, all participants would undertake to keep the password of the communal blogging site confidential and not to provide any other third party with access. This confidentiality between ourselves as a virtual community is absolutely vital.
- As the sole researcher for this project, I would own the data from both the blogging and also any follow-up interviews that are conducted, and their future use. I would be looking to use some data, if

appropriate, for future teaching training sessions I might run and in presentations, journal articles and for the final Doctoral thesis and other published works. This use would be limited to the occasional quotation – always anonymous.

Warren Kidd,

**Teaching Fellow, Senior Lecturer, University of East London
(UEL)**

Appendix C

Sample data from the wiki forum used for initial pilot research

Location: reflections-in-practice Discussion Forum

Discussions

How useful and relevant was the PGCE?

Ending the PGCE

Those first few lessons

Successes and failures? Highs and lows inside the classroom?

Honesty time!!

Pedagogic mismatches?

New role and new responsibilities?

Are there other things you would like to be able to do?

Those first few days

| | |
|------|---|
| 1. c | <p>1. RE: How useful and relevant was the PGCE?</p> <p>1:06 PM EDT</p> <p>HELLO! AM i ON????!!</p> <p>Anyway, with regards to the PGCE and my new job - it was incredibly useful, without which I wouldn't know what my subject pedagogy was/is, what to do in terms of student centred learning, how to speak (?!). How to run Q & A sessions etc etc.... I have met 'teachers' who have not got their PGCE or any teaching certificate, and they really come across as a bit disorganised and lacking the rapport with the student that the PGCE enabled my to understand in</p> |
|------|---|

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| | | a professional way..... instead of just trying to please the student instead..... does any of this make sense? |
| 2. | e | <p>RE: How useful and relevant was the PGCE?</p> <p>3:12 AM EDT</p> <p>Just thought I posted something ut can't find it anymore.... let's try again and apologies if it is on the site twice... will get there eventually.</p> <p>I think that our PGCE was very useful as it made us aware of learning techniques and concepts that create a more conducive learning environment.</p> <p>As for subject pedagogy (thanks for using THE word....) I am still not convinced that it is subject specific. Will observing team members in the next month or so and will be able to see if there is any common 'pedagogy'</p> |
| 3. | c | <p>4. RE: How useful and relevant was the PGCE?</p> <p>7:07 AM EDT</p> <p>Yeah, I guess pedagogy is not subject specific having mentioned it above! Just contradicting myself here, but I am inclined to agree with you. The way would describe pedagogy is something that encapsulates the entire teaching and learning process - taking an holistic view to it all. Drawing on specific aspects of theory, drawing on specific aspects of what and how you practice and also drawing on who you are as a person - drawing on your identity I guess..... if that makes sense.</p> |
| 4. | c | <p>6. RE: How useful and relevant was the PGCE?</p> <p>, 1:03 PM EDT</p> |

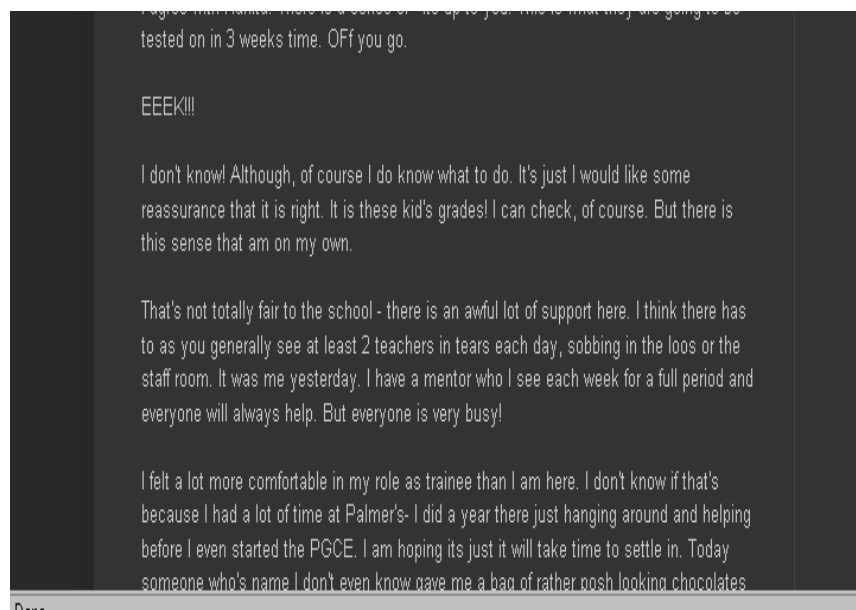
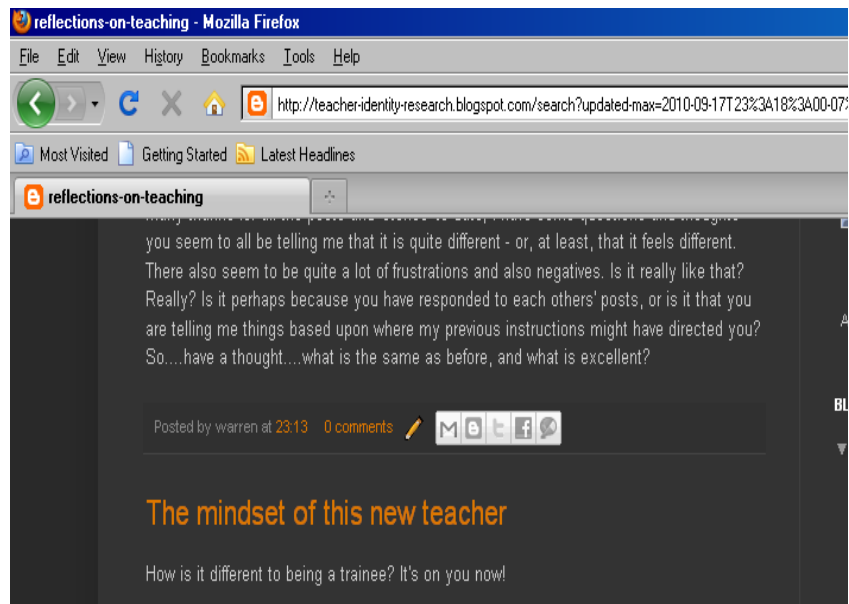
| | |
|------|--|
| | <p>Humanism perhaps has had the biggest effect..... but also the major biggy is the student-centred learning approach, the use of activities and games to get them learning!!!! Rather than didactic which is what I first imagined teaching to be.</p> <p>By the way a question to you all..... what do you do with 'bitchy' staff? The students are brilliant, but the staff are another story, any behavioural managment tips for this??!!!</p> |
| 5. m | <p>9. RE: How useful and relevant was the PGCE?</p> <p>10:28 AM EDT</p> <p>I think the PGCE was fantastic experience and extremely useful. I thought it was a very useful tool for us to formulate ideas which perhaps we were unsure when we began teaching. I found that it provided a great opportunity for us to find ourselves in terms of teaching and a particular style of communication. We also learnt valuable theories based on learning i.e. Kolb's cycle and Bloom's taxonomy but as I have said from the beginning nothing was more beneficial then observing the experience teachers that taught us. We were able to see ideas and theories put into practise but more importantly done effectively. My only problem is that I still want to be on the course... lol.</p> |
| 6. e | <p>11. RE: How useful and relevant was the PGCE?</p> <p>Today, 6:11 AM EST</p> <p>I think all of your sessions were relevant. What i am fiding difficult is using all of it all the time. I sometime go through a week where I focus on something and then realise that something lese has dropped off. I have been through some of your hold PP and I think that i shoudl ahve used your tactic of greeting the students at the door and asked them to sign in their register and drop off their</p> |

| | |
|------|--|
| | <p>coursework. I have adapted it and have now got a 'self check in' form for home work. I am trying it in and will see how well it does at half term.</p> |
| 7. m | <p>1. RE: Ending the PGCE</p> <p>, 12:29 PM EST</p> <p>When I left the PGCE I was quite sad as I felt like a child leaving the nest. I knew I had to do it but was a little scared of what the outside world would hold. I think my main reason for this was that I learnt so much from watching the lecturers at UEL I would no longer have that source of inspiration and guidance.</p> <p>My job interview was nerve wracking like any other interview would be for a job that you desired. I felt I did quite well hence I was able to get the job. But my preparation for the job was supported by current teachers at the college which was very useful as I was able to draw from the experience and success to formulate articulate answers which demonstrated my passion and desire to help and support younger students.</p> <p>I had a really good summer I did try to prepare as much as I could but found it really difficult to do as much work as I wanted because I was enjoying the sun too much. But there was a lot of excitement and apprehension which followed the end of the summer. I spoke quite frequently with the head of department which I am not sure if this helped or made it worse. I was genuinely excited by the prospect but I always told myself to take everything day by day.</p> |

Appendix D

Screenshot from the blog

Screenshot from the blogging demonstrating researcher presence



Appendix E

Opening researcher 'welcome' posts for participants joining the blog at the start of the research

How to use this Blog

This blog is the home for the teacher identity research being carried out by Warren Kidd. It is a private and secure community for newly qualified teachers to be invited to join and reflect, share and post their thoughts and observations about making the transition from 'trainee teacher' to newly qualified teacher, and what this means for their first year of employment/practice.

Posted by warren at [23:38](#) 0 comments

Welcome

This blog is private. Only those invited as an author can view our posts. Please keep what we say together herein private, and respect each other's privacy.

Once you have joined, and can therefore now read this, please introduce yourself to each other. You know each other since you were all taught together (and some of you might communicate outside of this and actually know you are taking part anyway). Please provide some context about your work.

It would be really useful to hear those reflections about the first few weeks of being a teacher now, before you forget them. The good and the bad. It would also be nice for you to reply to each other and see if

you have common ground etc.

Please post from time to time; I will also post and reply and 'get involved'.

Posted by warren at [23:40](#) 

Why are we doing this? A reminder...

I thought it might help to remind you again what I am trying to do here. This doesn't affect the outcome of the data collected from you, and morally, I feel you need to be absolutely completely and openly informed about what we are doing here. There are no hidden hypothesis – I am simply interested in your experiences and what you feel about being and becoming/changing into a 'teacher'.

As you know, I am looking for a sample of ex-PGCE PCET trainees to take part in this final stage of data collection for my Doctoral research. Your involvement would be one self-contained year, although the actual Doctorate itself I imagine will go on for the next two. I'm looking for about 5 - 7 people who fit the following profile (which you all do):

- Ex-UEL PGCE trainees
- Have employment in the lifelong learning sector
- Are starting a new professional carrier (I.e. were pre-service when training)

My research involves tracking and supporting new entrants into the profession, via the means of a reflective blog. I am wanting to chart the experiences that new entrants face - their hopes, fears, anxieties and successes with a view to seeing how new teachers form their sense of professional identity.

I will be guaranteeing to, and requesting from you all, the following:

- As with all ethical research, you would have the right to not take part if it does not interest you;
- You would also have the right to withdraw at any time;
- Your identity would be protected - I would not disclose who you are and where you worked. However, it is important that you realise that the other participants would know who were - and you them. I will explain this point later on.

The way the research works is:

- I would request that you undertake a commitment to try where possible to post comments on the blog every two weeks or so through your NQT year detailing your experiences. You would be able to read each other's experiences too.
- I would use these comments posted by yourself (you are free to post more than the above suggested amount) to make decisions and judgements about what works and doesn't work about the support we offer on the PGCE programme you studied, and also to structure interviews with you when I saw you - hopefully every term.
- You would as a result of this hopefully get access to some useful support: you would have me as a point of contact to share views and ideas, decisions and difficulties. You would also learn from the experiences of each other - and would be welcomed (but not obliged) to reply to each other's posts as you saw fit. I also think that by having access to each other's experiences this might provide you with a larger community of support.

Since this is a kind of participatory research (if you remember lovely M6.1) - I do not need to act 'at a distance' from you. I need to protect your anonymity but can offer opinion, take a view. I do need to be detached, but at the same time we are all here together. The idea is that I add some value to you in the way of support as a benefit of you

taking part, as you will add value and support to each other too.

I would also wish to use your comments on the blog for conference papers, articles and also for the final Doctorate thesis. While this is a pilot (a first attempt), the data would still hold. I am interested in how your journeys into 'professionalhood' unfold and what challenges and successes you meet along the way.

I hope this helps contextualise what we are doing here?

Posted by warren at [23:41](#)  _

Appendix F


Example of a 'hello world' post as a new participant joins the blog

Jumping in

Hi everyone. Well as I'm up early and receiving my invite I thought I'd jump in. I have a rare day off today. I've been teaching all summer on a pilot course assessing candidates for an apprenticeship scheme. So I get to choose my own learners! Hopefully I'll be teaching functional skills to them all in September and also teaching on some other skills for life courses. I say hopefully, courses are being set up and cancelled on a daily basis at the moment. So this is my first taste of being an hourly paid teacher, will I have work? will I not have work? worrying.

Will post again soon when I know who I'm talking to!

XXX

Posted by XXX at [00:57](#)  _

Appendix G

Example of an early blog post (in full) illustrating narrative style and researcher 'replies'

Sunday, 12 September

Induction

I started in July, in staff development week, amid moving home!
And I worked with the subject leader a lot over the summer talking about redesigning the course in many ways, and installing the new laser cutter!

I started the full time job, though, last Wednesday (1st September) and was involved in 3 days of enrolment, which was a valuable learning process; meeting students, finding my way around and learning some of the college processes. This past week has been a lot of training for new staff, curriculum meetings and prepping. I fear I'm not starting on the best foot as I have been working late every night, making things complicated for myself and although I don't start teaching a full time table until tomorrow, I am already shattered! I don't have a problem with working all the time but life is getting in the way a bit (which is obviously not the healthiest way to think!) I am still aiming for, and believe I will achieve, a balance.

Each period is 90 minutes and I am teaching 3 on Monday and Friday, 4 on Tuesday and Thursday and 1 or 2 on Wednesday (therefore my preparation and meeting day)

My organisation seems to get better with age or time, and that is reassuring! But I can over think things and in a way, being at such a high performing college with very high expectations makes me feel ever so slightly uneasy - constantly reevaluating the value of

everything I do and prepare, constantly making u-turns and changing my mind. On reflection, this is clearly a confidence issue - being indecisive is one of my weaknesses (strange for a designer I always think) and not feeling all-confident is really bringing that out.

I'm not entirely sure how to tackle this - I'm just throwing myself into prep and lessons. In writing this now I realise that although I have met the A2 groups (3 in total) I haven't yet directly worked with any students and it's hard prepping lessons and anticipating how they will go, with students and groups completely different to those I was teaching on placement. I think tomorrow evening (I hope) I'll feel more connected to the students and what I'm teaching and preparing!

Having said that, I don't want tomorrow to come too soon! Blog soon, XXX



13 September 05:17 XXX said...

LOL!!! I am knackered too - really exhausted. It is one of the things I am going to blog about. I have no life at the moment and its doing my head in!



13 September 11:12 warren said...

Is it what you expected it to be like?



Appendix H

Example of a post followed by researcher prompting and questioning

I think I'm just about starting to get the hang of this...

Hi all - it's great to read what's going on with everyone and so interesting...sorry I haven't posted again before now. I have been on a real rollercoaster in every sense of the word but the literal one and while I wish of course to be honest, I didn't want to open the floodgates, using our blog as pure therapy. I have been reflecting like mad, by myself (talking into my dictaphone on the drive home and playing it back on the drive to college) really trying to separate myself from the emotions and develop strategies to successfully deal with the stuff that's been getting to me! I've also been talking and reflecting with colleagues and friends, a lot (as some of you will know - thank you :)

I have now been teaching a full time table for 2 weeks. It feels like 6 weeks, really. For various reasons I only have 2 frees a week for planning but the time is not my own. I can't turn students away; if not then, if not at lunch, then when? There's not enough time in the day! Although I worked hard to joint-prepare a detailed scheme of work, as soon as teaching started, it all changed. It's great for things to be organic - responding to the students and being able to recap/concentrate/further certain things. But it makes me feel somewhat unprepared and not completely in control. I have been leaving the house before 7 and often getting home at 9 or later...long days, long weeks and then working at home at weekends. I don't have lunch, I don't stop. One of my problems is that I do things too thoroughly. Warren, I remember after my second micro teach, you commented how thorough/detailed the rationale and lesson plan was and said something like, 'really great, but you can't do this for every lesson'...I agreed, I agree, but I still do it (inner cursing). And it's hard to go backwards but I'm really trying now. I realise that it's now not so much of an inconvenience but a need; I'll burn out if not.

As I blog now I am feeling positive. I feel like something has clicked the past few days, I feel more connected with it all. I have prepped the next 2 weeks and feel the hope of shorter days to come and the feeling of more control and confidence. The Graphics department consists of the curriculum manager and me and so much of what I have prepared hasn't been used, and honestly, it has been so disheartening, moreover, I have felt all but useless...I have struggled with the pitch, the pace, the structure, the activities...working for hours only to have everything changed or discarded.

I can't tell you why I have been finding it so difficult and such hard work. The PGCE (as I tell everyone, not just because you're in on this Warren (!) was such a fantastic course and I couldn't fault it. I am at my dream college, with dream facilities and students, teaching my dream subject on a dream timetable...so the fact that I've been finding it so challenging has made me feel all the more useless. After all my intense reflecting (and please feel free to ask further questions as I have really stripped down my thoughts by this point!) I realise that I feel completely unprepared. And I think the reason I am unprepared is because my placement college and the college I am at now are at pretty opposite ends of the spectrum. In a profession where experience is as important as theory and learning, I have been starting again. In my placement college I was dealing with completely disengaged students, students with knives, kicking computers off desks, trying to set fire to things..what a world away! I am now at a Beacon college, one of the best in the UK and I really feel the pressure of getting it right. There is no expectation than the highest. The standard of the AS and A2 Art and Design work is that of 1st or 2nd year degree in many cases. I feel added pressure as my contract is only until 1st January, 'in the first instance' and I really really really want this job. I don't want to work anywhere else, I can't describe how much I love it, the job, the college, the students...To add to that, (I won't go into all the details) Edexcel awarding body have just marked all students across both years in every subject in the entire A&D department down 4 marks, putting many of

the students down a grade. The worst results in years. There is no other option but highest achievement.

Sometimes so crushed by my own 'inadequacies,' so tired, feeling so underconfident and unsure of my decisions and so (still) afraid of the future (will I keep this job or not?) that I've felt right on the edge of keeping it all together; really shaken up, but despite it all certainly being the hardest, most challenging and testing thing I've ever embarked upon, I have known (almost) every minute that I love teaching, I'm just desperate to get it right, to be an outstanding teacher, now and always. And it's hard, for me at least, to remind myself under these circumstances, that of course I am still learning - I know we always are, but we're right at the beginning and it's ok to not be rehearsed, experienced, confident, knowledgeable about certain things. There is that comfort, is there not, on the PGCE, that one is a 'student teacher'. And then you stop teaching in May, June (really), lose all your powers over the summer and then as firm a start as a gunshot starting a race, you're in, it's all go and 'you're a professional', apparently, thinking, 'how does this work again?'. Honestly it's been a brutal shock!

Stay strong friends! Blog soon.

Posted by SS at [12:04](#)


2 comments:



warren said...

Such an open and honest post. Really appreciate this. I am happy for you to use this blog for 'therapy' - in a sense, that's one of the benefits for you all - you get a set of people to talk and unload to (including me) who do not work where you do....we can be separate from that which goes on at work, at least in a sense. The time-pressure is a huge issue - for all good teachers (and you all are) - and you are so so right when you say there is a tension between

rest/prep/turning students away. They are such hard decisions and balances to get right....

27 September 22:26 



[warren](#) said...

Something I have just thought about, after re-reading your post again. You called it 'I think I have the hang of this'...can I ask, what is 'this', and how do you think you have the hang of it? I am asking this quite genuinely...you hint at some really interesting things going on with your practice and its development - can you elaborate?

27 September 22:45 

Appendix I

Sample questions asked of participants while blogging

Welcomes

Welcome to XXX and XXX

XXX is also on here, and I am sure will post soon. I'm interested in the contrast, I guess, between the placement last year and the 'real thing' in this year. ... And in how this might change how you feel in your head. Any thoughts? How does the role feel now? How does that compare with your training year?

w

Posted by warren at [03:22](#)

XXX and XXX

A formal hello and welcome to both XXX and XXX who have joined our little group here. I am sure there will not be any more members now. So...hello, and welcome! Check out some of the older posts from me which gives suggestions on what to do, and how often, and join in! XXX - you have beat me to it, and posted already! Great to see you both here....

Posted by warren at 22:46

Overarching theme

As you will all know from my pre-research blurb I sent out, this research I am doing using this blog is both a pilot for my Doctorate and also itself a means through which I can explore a theme that I am really interested in - which is how emerging teachers 'become teachers' in terms of their identity.

This is what I am interested in - and it is important that you know that; it makes no difference to the outcome of the research, and I feel it important that you are all as informed as you can be. So... Do you have any views or thoughts on this? It would be amazing to hear your views. How do you think teachers become teachers, and create a teacher identity? How does it work on the PGCE and how does it work now you are employed. Would really like to hear your thoughts about this...

W Posted by warren at [22:43](#)

Questions to consider...

Some things to think about.

Ignore, reflect, post, answer, answer some or just keep telling me what you wish to even if it doesn't connect with these questions...but things to think about nonetheless.

If you have already 'answered' these (before I am even asking them), then do not worry - unless you feel you have more to say?

Do you have more freedom this year?

What are the challenges of now 'being a teacher'?

How different is this year from last?

How much preparation was the PGCE? How much preparation was placement?

Is the way you teach (and the way we have asked you to) mirrored in your institutions?

Do you feel 'a teacher' now?

Are you being supported?

How are you 'figuring out' your role?

Posted by warren at [22:53](#)

Visits? (Don't forget)

Hey everyone, many thanks for all the posts so far. In the new year I intend to give you all back a quick 'analysis' of what I think you have been telling me/each other - for you to see if you agree with me or not?

Check out the post below for a final request for some info this side of the holiday...

Finally, don't forget those cups of tea and trips/visits if you want? A couple of you have arranged for me to come and see you - please do so if you want to?

w

Posted by warren at [04:12](#)

End of term...

Conscious that it is now almost the end of term for us/you....This is certainly the hardest term, I think, of them all. so - some requests-

1. Can you all summarise in five words what being a teacher is like?
2. Can you tell me what you think next term/the rest of the year will be like?
3. What do you regret?
4. What are you most pleased about?

w

Posted by warren at [04:10](#)

Questions - part 2

Many thanks to all of you who 'answered' my previous set of questions. Some of you have said this makes it easier for you - to have a set of things to think about.

Here are some more - please have a think about these and post replies/reflections/answers if you can...

1. What has had the greatest impact from the PGCE on your practice?
2. What has the PGCE not prepared you for? (And what could we, if anything, do about this?)
3. What have been the two greatest/biggest/most significant 'critical incidents' of your role as teacher to date?
4. How has the institution you are now in (and colleagues) 'incorporated' you into their 'normal working practices'?

Answers would be really interesting and helpful at this time.

Posted by warren at [22:39](#)

Don't forget the comments

Hi. I have started to pose individual questions to you in the comments to some posts you are making, and I know that some of you are using comments to chat to each other....Don't forget to check them out for each of the posts you have made...I know blogger isn't the most user-friendly of blogs.....

Posted by warren at [22:45](#)

Is it 'working'?

Hello everyone.

A couple of you have emailed me recently to say 'sorry for not posting much' and also 'is it working (in terms of my research)?'...

Firstly, post as much as you want; it would be good to get something every week - there will be times when you have more to say, and also times when you have less. Do also make an effort to read others' contributions and post comments if you can....

So, it is working? Well, I don't know! You are all generating some really really interesting comments, so this is producing 'data' that I can use. But I am holding back from coding the data until much later on, so that I can simply concentrate on being someone who is here on this blog reading your thoughts alongside you. A few of you have said it is useful when I ask direct questions - so I will do this from time to time, if it helps?

Another thing, please do not worry about moaning - say what you feel. We are all teachers, and we all now know what it is like! It is an amazing job, but caring about doing well (as you all do) means that you do sometimes end up frustrated.....it is more than okay to share this. But for all our collective well-being, tell us about the highs too...

Finally, in terms of 'is it working' - I guess I need to ask that of you all. Does it help having a small group of people to share thoughts with? Does it help to read each others'? This is your site as much (if not more so) than mine - so - is it working?

Posted by warren at [22:39](#)

Is it really that different? Is it really that frustrating?

Hi everyone

many thanks for all the posts and 'stories' to date; I have some questions and thoughts - you seem to all be telling me that it is quite different - or, at least, that it feels different. There also seem to be quite a lot of frustrations and also negatives. Is it really like that? Really? Is it perhaps because you have responded to each others' posts, or is it that you are telling me things based upon where my previous instructions might have directed you? So....have a thought....what is the same as before, and what is excellent?

Posted by warren at [23:13](#)

Appendix J

Examples of ‘threads’ created by participants on the blog

Pilot wiki threads:

Ending the PGCE

Those first few lessons

Successes and failures? Highs and lows inside the classroom?

honesty time!!

Pedagogic mismatches?

New role and new responsibilities?

Blog threads. Year 1:

Happy again!

Learning to be calm...

A lot of reflection!

It takes time

And the light at the end of the tunnel

The role

What I am learning

I'm back

Updates, frustrations and lessons learnt!

When you strongly disagree with what's being taught

If you want to understand something - teach it!

burdened

Safeguarding.....and other random thoughts!

Can I Multiply Myself

That's it

Help!

I think I'm just about starting to get the hang of this...

Waaaaah! *expletive, expletive!*

Get off my toes... please!!

Pedagogy

On the positive side

The mindset of this new teacher

Taking off my trainee shoes.

Induction mayhem!

What I did in the first week

I survived my first full week of teaching!!

Summer induction

Hello there

Blog threads. Year 2:

Middle-Aged Ladies

The Fear

Jumping in

Office Politics no. 1

Finally jumping in (thanks to a nudge from El Kidd)

Whoopsie

Dog eat Dog

Understatement of the century

Going live

Forgot to say

Oof

Pink forms, yellow forms, blue forms

A feeling of drowning

Ups and downs

Obs & unions

The return of observations

Not a pitchfork in sight, but plenty of turfing.

Strike etiquette

Am I still alive?

Appendix K

Example of the start of a 'thread':

The mindset of this new teacher

How is it different to being a trainee? It's on you now!

I agree with XXX. There is a sense of - its up to you. This is what they are going to be tested on in 3 weeks time. OFF you go.

EEEEK!!!

I don't know! Although, of course I do know what to do. It's just I would like some reassurance that it is right. It is these kid's grades! I can check, of course. But there is this sense that am on my own.

That's not totally fair to the school - there is an awful lot of support here. I think there has to as you generally see at least 2 teachers in tears each day, sobbing in the loos or the staff room. It was me yesterday. I have a mentor who I see each week for a full period and everyone will always help. But everyone is very busy!

I felt a lot more comfortable in my role as trainee than I am here. I don't know if that's because I had a lot of time at Palmer's- I did a year there just hanging around and helping before I even started the PGCE. I am hoping its just it will take time to settle in. Today someone who's name I don't even know gave me a bag of rather posh looking chocolates as I was so upset yesterday. The staff are very nice and I think that will help.

Palmer's was a good college, compared to this school. It is the worst school in the area and although there has been massive improvements

over the last few years it is still a bad school with *ahem* *challenging* kids.
I have to keep reminding myself why I am here.

Also when it got tough as a trainee there was a sense of - its only this year, just a few more months. I;m not a proper member of staff, so xxxx is because of that and it will be better when I am actually a teacher.

Whereas this is IT. This is what I have been training for and I have actually wanted to do for my whole life.

So am I being a crap teacher and is that it, its all over now. Or is it actually the kids who addmitted to me yesterday that they were being horrible to me becuase they wanted their old teacher; are just rebelling against change and its not me personally.

Of course I know its not me, XXX, that they hate. It is me, teacher they don't know, that they hate. But it is hard to differentiate at times.

So in my head right now is focused on sticking out the next few weeks and staying in the job without taking up drinking and smoking; or going slightly crazy(ier); rather than its just until the end of the course.

Quite a different mindset really.

XXX

Posted by XXX at [03:28](#) 4 comments 

4 comments:

 XXX said...

sounds like the kids really are trying to make your life difficult. Think about it this way, it's probably because your making them do more work and stretching them more than they have been before. Your a great teacher, but I have been having similar thought. We will get past them!!!

21 September 01:53 



XXX said...

yes we will!

22 September 06:39 



[warren](#) said...

often learners (of all ages) react negatively to new teachers because it is not what they are expecting; they need time to see the results of their learning with your teaching; show them what they are learning and how, and give them some insight into why you are doing what you are doing....no one ever does that, so be the one who does. Make them see why you are teaching the way you are...and get them to see the successes with you and then they will come round

23 September 08:00 




XXX said...

Yeah I do that a lot. I ask them why have we done this exercise? What was the point? And they do like it and it was even picked up

by someone as something they should all do (I can't remember why they were in my classroom at the time).

I even went through Blooms taxonomy with my year 9s today.
Mwah ha ha ha ha.


23 September 12:26 

Appendix L

Example of the start of a 'thread' – year two blog

Just re-reading some posts by XXX and XXX.....

Just re-reading some older posts - a direct question for you - was there anything from the PGCE which is absolutely essential which you are so glad we did? Anything missed which on hindsight we really ought to have done (SEN is already mentioned)

Posted by warren at 00:25 2 comments  _

2 comments:



XXX said...

Absolutely. Will post properly tomorrow. Ability to achieve anything in the evening is currently low to none. Ability to go to bed before 11pm is improving greatly.

28 September 14:31 



XXX said...

Although this isn't an ACTUAL specific thing like SEN, (in hindsight) I found it really useful how we had to do lots of different things at the same time, and have 2 'hats'. UEL work hat and placement hat. That is definitely helping now I am working at 2 places. But if I'm honest I'm finding it quite taxing at the mo!

I found the classroom activities we did in subject specific groups very useful, although some more specialist area tuition would have helped. I sometimes felt like I was trying to do certain things in ATPSs that I felt like I 'should' do, rather than what fitted exactly with my subject. But then again, maybe that's because I'd never seen some of the activities we were introduced to by UEL used in the classroom in any Art & Design lessons that I'd observed, or been shown an exemplar of how to incorporate certain methods by a subject specialist.

I bloody loved M4 actually. (Eventually) I really enjoyed doing it, and I think it was essential. Even though I got the TES and read the Education sections of various newspapers throughout the course, for me it was invaluable to research deeply into a specific subject about the context of PCET. I've never in my life felt so politically energised, and that feels good. Even though the current situation is pretty depressing.

When I was chatting to XXX the other day and we were having a little catch up, I said to her 'I definitely rate our PGCE.'

29 September 15:41

"I think I'm going to be found out and chased away with pitchforks"

This title - above - is something I have just read in the posts below. I think this is what we might call 'imposter syndrome'? Some of you feel that 'it's different now - I am 'authentic' and left alone'. Any more about any of this from you. Do you feel a 'real' teacher - and if so, in whose eyes?

W

4 comments:



XXX said...

This post has been removed by the author.

29 September 09:49 



XXX said...

Yeah I do feel real. The biggest part of that is being there from the start of term. Maybe it's being trusted to make decisions about how I teach but mainly I think it's having the classes from the beginning. Big difference - as you all made clear that it would be during the course. All the other staff seem to treat me as an equal, if an overly keen, over-prepared and sometimes bewildered one.

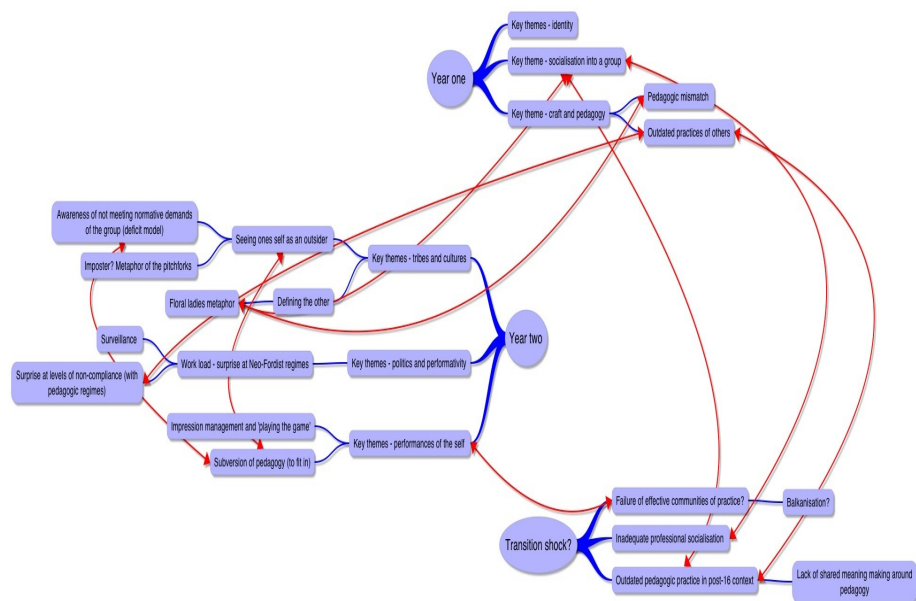
29 September 09:50 



Appendix M

Various coding processes from early stages of the data handling

Mapping of emerging themes between year 1 and 2 cohorts



Coding

Emerging concerns part 1

St 1

- 'Finding professional identity' PID
- Need to find new inspiration CR
- Continuing learningLE
- Needing to navigate through office politicsPOL
- Mistrust at staff negativityMIS
- Surprise at motivation of staff and studentsST
- Making transition into a new roleTRANS
- Constructing new identity NID
- Life-work imbalance WL
- Pedagogic mismatchPM

St 2

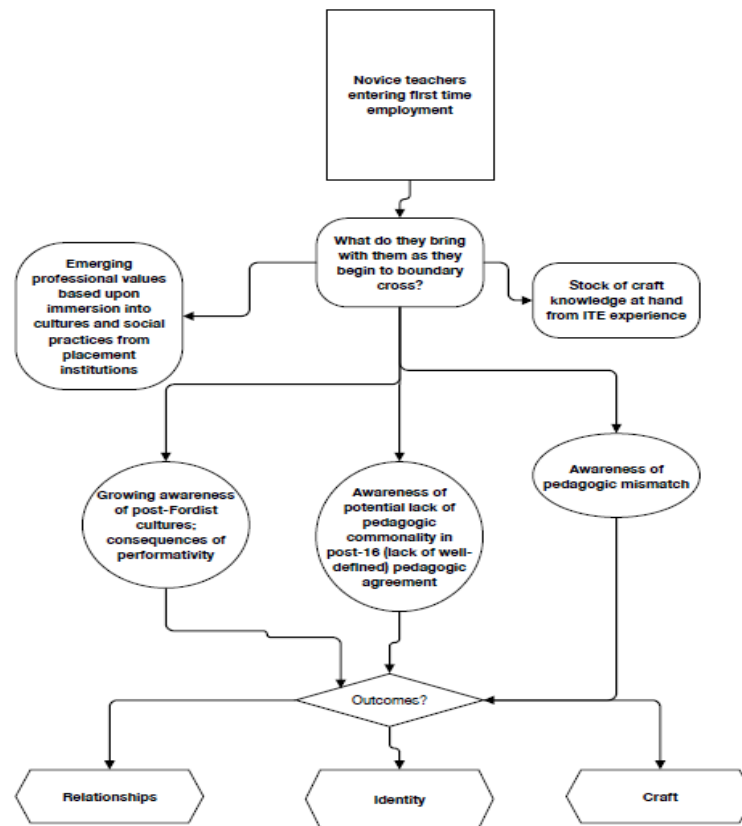
PLUS

- Challenge CH
- OtherOTH
- Emotions EM

St 3

- Boundary crossing BOUND

Model of 'boundary-crossing practices' – two years of data



Codes developed

| CODING | CODING FINAL |
|--|---|
| <p>CRAFT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pedagogic mismatch PM 2. Need to find new inspiration CR 3. Continuing learning LE 4. Mistrust at staff negativity MIS <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Challenge CH 2. Boundary crossing BOUND 3. Life-work imbalance WL <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Emotions EM <p>RELATIONSHIPS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Making transition into a new role TRANS 6. Needing to navigate through office politics POL 7. Mistrust at staff negativity MIS 8. Surprise at motivation of staff and students OTH <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Challenge CH | <p>CRAFT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Life-work imbalance WL 2. Pedagogic mismatch PM <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emotions EM 2. Time TM 3. Performativity PE 4. 'doing good job' JOB <p>RELATIONSHIPS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Making transition into a new role TRANS 6. Boundary crossing BOUND 7. Challenge CH <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Other OTH 2. Value(d) VA 3. Fitting in FIT 4. Existing practices EXIS 5. Student relations STU |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Other OTH</p> <p>2. Boundary crossing BOUND</p> <p>3. Emotions EM</p> <p>IDENTITY</p> <p>4. Making transition into a new role TRANS</p> <p>5. 'Finding professional identity' PID</p> <p>6. Constructing new identity NID</p> <p>7. Continuing learning LE</p> <p>8. Challenge CH</p> <p>9. Boundary crossing BOUND</p> | <p>IDENTITY</p> <p>6. Making transition into a new role TRANS</p> <p>7. Boundary crossing BOUND</p> <p>8. Constructing new identity NID</p> <p>9. Continuing learning LE</p> <p>10. Challenge CH</p> <p>11. Role RO</p> |
|--|--|

CRAFT

1. Life-work imbalance WL
2. Pedagogic mismatch PM
1. Emotions EM
2. Time TM
3. Performativity PE
4. 'doing good job' JOB

RELATIONSHIPS

5. Making transition into a new role TRANS
6. Boundary crossing BOUND
7. Challenge CH
1. Other OTH
2. Value(d) VA
3. Fitting in FIT
4. Existing practices EXIS
5. Student relations STU

IDENTITY

6. Making transition into a new role TRANS
7. Boundary crossing BOUND
8. Constructing new identity NID

9. Continuing learning LE

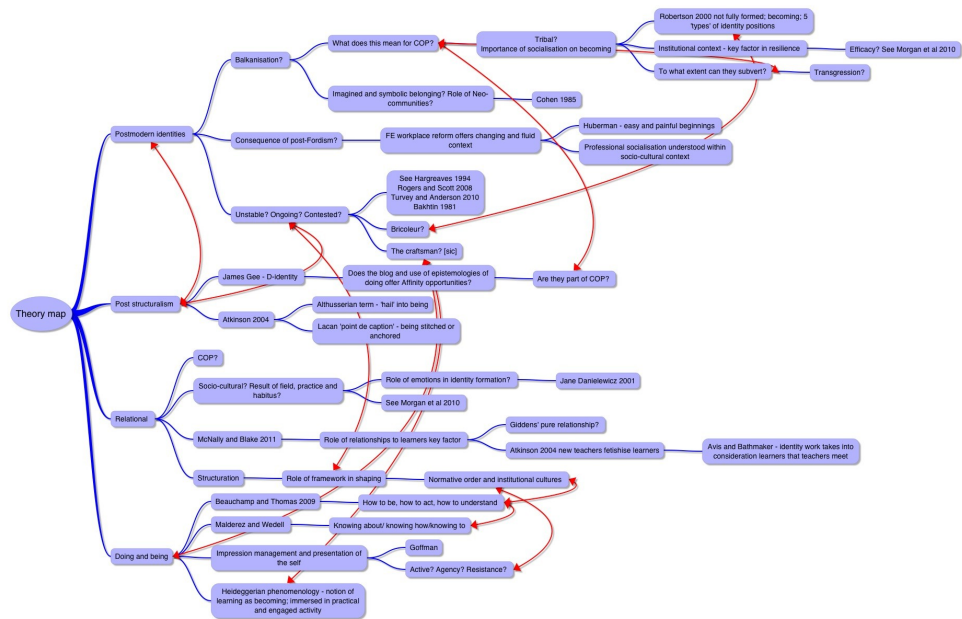
10. Challenge CH

11. Role RO

Mapping the data to concepts from the literature



Production of a 'Theory Map'



Appendix N

Copy of original university research ethics approval for the research



Professor Jean Murray
CASS School of Education
Stratford

ETH/13/31

27 October 2010

Dear Jean,

Application to the Research Ethics Committee: Tinkering with the tools of their trade (W Kidd)

I advise that Members of the Research Ethics Committee have now approved the above application on the terms previously advised to you. The Research Ethics Committee should be informed of any significant changes that take place after approval has been given. Examples of such changes include any change to the scope, methodology or composition of investigative team. These examples are not exclusive and the person responsible for the programme must exercise proper judgement in determining what should be brought to the attention of the Committee.

In accepting the terms previously advised to you I would be grateful if you could return the declaration form below, duly signed and dated, confirming that you will inform the committee of any changes to your approved programme.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Debbie Dada', is positioned above the typed name.

Debbie Dada
Admissions and Ethics Officer
Direct Line: 0208 223 2976
Email: d.dada@uel.ac.uk

Research Ethics Committee: ETH/13/31

I hereby agree to inform the Research Ethics Committee of any changes to be made to the above approved programme and any adverse incidents that arise during the conduct of the programme.

Signed:.....Date:

Please Print Name:

